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GUNS & BUTTER

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DEMOCRATIC GHOSTS

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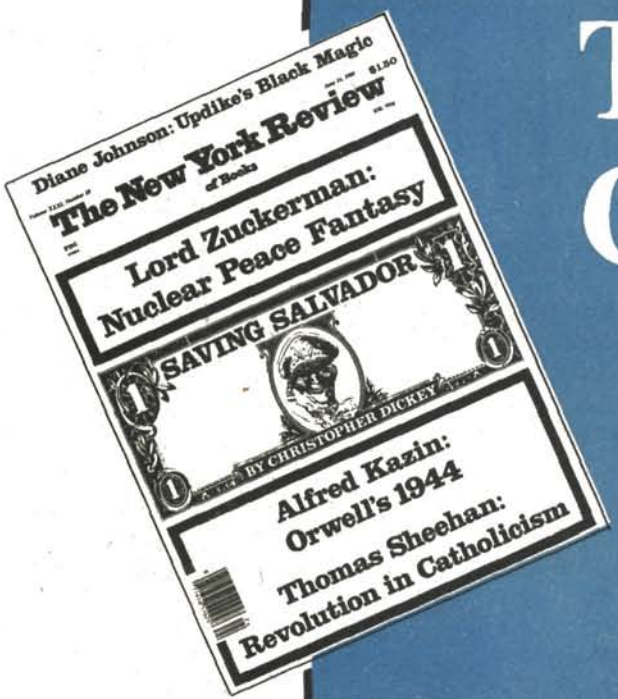

The end of Catholicism

Is liberal theology eviscerating the faith? Two Catholic scholars reply to Thomas Sheehan.

David Tracy
Andrew M. Greeley

Worker ownership in our future

COREY ROSEN

Ferraro, faith, & abortion

THE EDITORS, DAVID P. CARLIN, JR.

The 'naked public square'

WILLIAM M. SULLIVAN

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Correspondence

Tribute to struggle

Cambridge, Mass.

To the Editors: Joseph P. Fitzpatrick's memorial for Dorothy Dohen ["A Lay Apostle," June 1] reminded me of the great value of her book, *Nationalism and American Catholicism*. It was written at a time of widespread super-nationalism espoused by American Catholics eager to establish their American nativism. Discernment such as hers helped prepare Americans for the bishops' pastoral letter on nuclear war, and for making needed distinctions between the search for faith and the often uncivil religions of nationalism.

Although I knew and respected her as a fellow sociologist, I had no grasp of the extent of her struggle concerning how, in the love of Christ, one should work daily to change the world. She was at once a radical, a reformer, and a conserver of going concerns until something better could be put in their place. Her faith led her to be critical even of her allies, priests and theologians committed to liberation theology, who " . . . in practice and sometimes unwittingly take away the hope of the poor in the world to come . . . ." But as she poignantly made clear, her own hope in that world blended with her knowledge of what the atheist knows, and her feeling "what the most arid secularist feels."

Her spiritual commitment led her to her vocation to virginity. This once valued possibility comes rarely today to the attention of young people in school and college. With the loss of vocations and the shrinking of the teaching Orders, few students at any age become aware that one can lead a fulfilled life with a commitment to virginity. High culture, popular culture, and exhibitionist example repeat the iterated message that there is no distinction between erotic sensibility and overt sexual activity. Dorothy Dohen had something to say to the young women who today are often ashamed of their virginity, some of whom take refuge in a version of defensive lesbianism, discovering no legitimate way that they can defend themselves against the importuning of aggressive (and also vulnerable) men.

DAVID RIESMAN

Commonweal welcomes letters on subjects treated in its pages. Letters of not more than 250 or 300 words naturally have a better chance of being published.

Giving credit

Trenton, N.J.

To the Editors: You identify movie critic Tom O'Brien as a teacher at the Manhattan School of Music, but . . . . Cole Porter did *not* compose "How You Gonna Keep 'Em Down on the Farm After They've Seen Paree?" as O'Brien states in his review of *Mutiny on the Bounty* [June 1].

Walter Donaldson, another great American songwriter, was the composer, and the lyrics were the collaboration of Joe Lewis and Sam Young. Also, it was published in 1919, not "in the 1920s."

As ol' Casey Stengel used to say, he could look it up. Which wouldn't have been a bad idea.

DAWES THOMPSON

Where credit is due

Fairfield, Conn.

To the Editors: I wonder why a publication of *Commonweal*'s standards brings reviews of translated books without mentioning the translator or the quality of the translation without even — in some instances — informing the reader that what he gets is not the original wording. In *Commonweal*'s May 18 edition, works by Milan Kundera, Alfred Döblin, José Donoso, Karl Rahner are reviewed with no mention of their translators, not even in their introductory headings. It seems to me that this is shortchanging the writers, the translators, and the readers.

Since the art of translation has recently been given deserved attention, especially through the efforts of P.E.N., perhaps *Commonweal* could be persuaded to follow the trend by giving recognition where recognition is due.

HEDWIG RAPPOLT

The editors reply

Nostra culpa. We will begin our reformed life by indicating the translators of the books our reader mentions:

Milan Kundera, *The Book of Laughter and Forgetting*, translated by Michael H. Heim.

Alfred Döblin, *November 1981: A German Revolution*, translated by John E. Woods.

José Donoso, *A House in the Country*, translated by Susan Jill Levine and Daniel Pritchert.

Karl Rahner, *The Practice of Faith: A Handbook of Contemporary Spirituality*. Multiple translators.

THE EDITORS

Tolerant pluralism

Montreal, Canada

To the Editors: Juan-Lorenzo Hinojosa's biting critique of Ralph Martin's analysis of the contemporary crisis in the church ["Are charismatics off course?" March 9] is misleading. First, does Martin's contribution really militate against true plurality? The existence of an articulate voice deeply committed to an important tradition of Christian dogma would seem to enhance rather than impoverish real pluralism. Hinojosa seems to advocate a repressive form of pluralism that militates against true pluralism insofar as it is intolerant of the so-called "extremes" and constantly pushes for a *via media*.

Secondly, Hinojosa's critique of Martin's appreciation of the objectivity of

(Continued on page 446)

Commonweal, [ISSN 0010-3330] A Review of Public Affairs, Religion, Literature, and the Arts, is published biweekly, except monthly Christmas-New Year's and July and August, by Commonweal Foundation, 232 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10016. Telephone: (212) MU 3-2042. Single copy, $1.25. Yearly subscriptions, U.S., $24; Canada, $26; foreign, $29. Special two-year rate: U.S., $43; Canada, $47; foreign, $53. All Canadian and foreign subscriptions must be paid in U.S. dollars by International Money Order or by check on a U.S. bank. *Commonweal* is indexed in Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature, Catholic Periodical Index, Index of American Periodical Verse, Book Review Digest and Book Review Index. Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y. Copyright © 1984 Commonweal Foundation. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Commonweal, 232 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10016.

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Contents

Volume CXI, Number 14

Correspondence 418

Editorials 419

Conventional ghosts: *Peter Kovler* 421

Patchy garment: *David R. Carlin, Jr.* 422

Guns and butter: *John Garvey* 423

The end of Catholicism?: 425

Levels of liberal consensus: *David Tracy* 426

The ways of knowing: *Andrew M. Greeley* 431

Next step: worker ownership?: *Corey Rosen* 434

Verse: *Nancy G. Westerfield* 437
Ken Gaertner, John Nixon, Jr., E.B. de Vito, Anne Porter 443

Screen: *Foster Hirsch* 438

Dance: *Don McDonagh* 439

Books

The Naked Public Square: *William M. Sullivan* 440

Foreign Bodies: *Gerard Reedy* 441

The Electrical Workers: *Charles Owen Rice* 442

Children Without Childhood/Whole Child/Whole Parent/In Defense of the Family: *Janet Scott Barlow* 444

The History of Polish Literature: *Jerzy R. Krzyzanowski* 446

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Illustrations: Cover, John Backderf, Rothco; p. 424, Bas., *Tachydromos*, Greece; p. 425, *La Vida Nueva*, Spain; p. 433, Cotham, *Punch*; p. 436, Rita Corbin.

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A CATHOLIC WOMAN IN THE WHITE HOUSE?

IT IS THE LULL between conventions and so far, so good. Win or lose in November — and *Newsweek*'s post-convention Gallup poll has surprised everyone by finding the two parties in a dead heat — the Democrats have already performed several major services. First, Mr. Mondale boldly acknowledged his intention to raise taxes to meet the looming deficit. If Mr. Reagan is not going to raise taxes, as he says, or at least as he *almost* says, then the president is going to have to explain exactly whose human services, government assistance, monthly checks, or military programs are going to be cut further. Someone, somehow, sometime, will have to meet the mounting bills. Some deficits are not only tolerable but appropriate, as not only Keynesians but many competent business executives will admit. *This* accelerating deficit is another matter. At the very least, it will have enormously serious consequences, and Mondale deserves credit for bluntly forcing the administration, and the public, to face them.

But the Democratic nominee's unusual stroke of candor was, quite rightly, overshadowed by two earlier developments. First, a black citizen mounted a serious bid for the party's presidential nomination. Second, the Democrats nominated a woman for the vice-presidency and therefore, in principle, as a potential holder of the nation's highest office.

The fact that both these steps have already provoked a great deal of rhetoric about "opening doors" and so on does not mean they are any the less important. This time, the rhetoric is deserved. Nor is their significance diminished by the fact that both these breakthroughs had their ambiguities. In real politics, how could it be otherwise?

Jesse Jackson's campaign was marked by ambiguity from the start (see *Commonweal*, "Etc.," Jan.27), long before the "Hymietown" remarks and his unwillingness to repudiate Louis Farrakhan inflicted wounds that not even his dramatic expression of sorrow at the convention podium will easily heal. Nonetheless, the oppression and exclusion of black Americans is *the* seismic fault in this nation's history — and again and again white Americans naively expect *those* wounds to be healed easily. When Jesse Jackson gave an illustration of Southern-style preaching at its best, leaving his constituents in the convention hall glassy-eyed and holding hands and unself-consciously exultant while others, though often moved and approving, remained uncomfortable with his evangelical style and uneasy about the waves of emotion it aroused; when the TV screen's montage of black and white faces showed so dramatically all these different reactions, one sensed both how important a step had been taken in breaching the barrier between races and also how simple-minded it had been ever to imagine that this road could be, or would yet be, smooth. At a time when a kind of sneaking resignation to the inevitability of racial inequality in America has seemed to grow apace, Jesse Jackson reignited black political

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Going on 60

From Commonweal twenty years ago: "A funny thing happened to the Republican Party on the way to the Cow Palace: Barry Goldwater captured it. By purely peaceful and legal means he and his supporters have already effected what is almost certainly an irreversible revolution in American politics. . . . Years, if not decades, must pass before the full sweep of the profound changes which are now being unleashed can be intellectually digested or fully comprehended.

". . . It is an axiom of politics that any two-party system has an inherent bias toward moderate centrism . . . But it is precisely this urge toward the middle of the road which was overthrown at San Francisco. . . . Thus the delegates chose the one man who stands even farther to the right than the congressional wing of the party. Goldwater's acceptance speech, with its ringing endorsement of extremism "in the defense of liberty," was strictly a take-it-or-leave-it proposition. Those who wish to join his crusade are welcome. The others he brutally and publicly writes off.

". . . It is almost impossible to see how the moderates and liberals can remain within the party. They do so for the moment only because they hope to recapture it after a Goldwater defeat in November. But . . . it has already become clear — win, lose, or draw — that the moderates will have to contend with a party apparatus which, being dominated by ideologues, will become far more cohesive and tightly-knit than any major organization has been in our history. The men in control have extremely long-range plans, which very probably include the cheerful acceptance of the right kind of defeat in November if it will help them in 1968 or 1972. Secondly, a very large number of these moderates will almost certainly be swept out of office — and hence out of any contest for party power — by the anti-Goldwater landslide which is in the making in their Northeastern heartland, if not in the country at large . . . Whether he wins or loses, his campaign seems destined to produce a heavy rightward drag within the American political system as a whole."

— Walter Dean Burnham,
"The Goldwaterite Revolution" August 7,1964

consciousness. The achievement of this self-styled "not perfect" leader — and of the political party that has had to contain the energies he loosed — must be acknowledged.

There is much less ambiguity about the step that was taken with the vice-presidential nomination of Congresswoman Geraldine Ferraro. Only the invisible barrier of "unthinkableness" has kept women from greater political leadership. That barrier has been shattered now, no matter the outcome in November. The justified excitement generated by this irreversible fact, however, makes it more difficult to assess the candidate herself. To all appearances she is a competent, conventional liberal. Not only the first woman but also the first Italian-American to be nominated for the second highest office, she also represents the American Dream in its post-World War II dress: the struggle to get through college and into a profession, the move to a nice neighborhood, the two vacation homes, the private schools and Ivy League colleges for the next generation. Mrs. Ferraro is no working-class hero, nor even a pathbreaker as a legislator; but she has retained a solid liberal view of governmental responsibility at home and restraint abroad often abandoned by others who experienced the same kind of economic success.

The greater ambiguity has arisen because of her religion. Indeed, the Democratic convention was a reminder, if one is still needed, of the pervasive importance of religion in our public life. The Reverend Jackson preached; but so, in a different, more philosophical, and more Catholic mode, did Governor Cuomo. Mr. Mondale evinced, as always, the reserved bearing and restraint learned in a Methodist home, as the son of a minister. But it was Mrs. Ferraro's candidacy that has put religion to the fore.

Fair enough, in one sense. The congresswoman was chosen, at least in part, to appeal to Catholic voters. But what an irony: in 1960, the question was whether JFK was too faithful a Catholic to be qualified for high office; now the question is whether Mrs. Ferraro is faithful enough! The key issue, of course, is abortion, especially since her views (like Mr. Mondale's) appear in sharp contrast to the president's.

Whether abortion will really be an important issue in the presidential election is an open question. To us, it *is* an important issue. What *Roe v. Wade* sanctioned by way of a massive resort to abortion has got to be reversed. But there is more than one position that a Catholic politician can take, in keeping with good church tradition, about the role of government in that reversal. The only explanation we have seen of Mrs. Ferraro's own position is, unfortunately, five years old and not very extensive. "As a Catholic," she declared on the House floor, "I accept the premise that a fertilized ovum is a baby. I have been blessed with the gift of faith; but others have not. I have no right to impose my beliefs on them. I firmly believe, given my current situation, that I could never have an abortion. I am not so sure, however, if I were the victim of rape . . . I would be so self-righteous. The cost of putting an unwanted child through the system far outweighs the cost of funding these procedures."

There are several elements in this statement we find disturbing. First, while the "gift of faith" may indeed have something to do with perception of the value of unborn life — as it may with the perception of the immorality of nuclear devastation or the equality of all men and women — is this simply a sectarian matter? Is there nothing that ordinary moral reasoning can tell all of us, Catholic or non-Catholic, believers or unbelievers, about the rights not only of the "fertilized ovum" but of the well-developed fetus? Second, Mrs. Ferraro's reference to rape is an honest recognition of the uncertainty we must all share about our own moral decisions under pressure, but

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reference to cases where a woman has been so unambiguously a victim of violence is also too frequently a way in which public sentiment is garnered while the more common reasons for large numbers of abortions remain undiscussed. At the same time, Mrs. Ferraro's use of the phrase "so self-righteous" is peculiar, as though what was at stake in cases where women refuse abortion was generally a matter of one degree or another of self-righteousness. Third, there is her disconcerting calculus of the pecuniary cost of abortion compared to the burden on the taxpayer of supporting the unwanted. And finally there is the stock phrase about not imposing one's beliefs.

Congresswoman Ferraro's position may well have roots in her experience in the Special Victims Bureau of the District Attorney's office, where she worked daily with perpetrators and victims of domestic violence, including child abuse. She knows that problems for so many mothers and their children do not end at birth but may in fact begin there. At the same time, her position appears to be equally rooted in the conventional liberalism that would pigeonhole concern about the value of fetal life as a matter solely of religion and take refuge in the individualistic shibboleth about not imposing beliefs. As the Democratic vice-presidential nominee sits in center stage over the next few months, we wish she would clarify and refine her position, possibly with some sound theological advice.

But if that is a challenge to Mrs. Ferraro, her candidacy is also a challenge to the church. She vividly illustrates the possibility of a range among Catholics of personal and political responses to the abortion problem. She is an undoubted believer and faithful practitioner, reared in a Catholic home, educated in a Catholic college and Catholic law school, a wife of two decades, a mother of three children. If she does not rely in a more nuanced way on the church's teachings in this area, how much of that is due to the fact that the church's performance has fallen short in compassion and respect both for the problems of women who are victimized and the accomplishments of women who have struggled and achieved? If many Catholic women feel forced to choose between the church's apparent refusal to acknowledge legitimate differences on abortion and the credibility of a strong and independent woman like Mrs. Ferraro, it is hard to see that anyone will come out a winner.

BY THE RIVER

The blast of summer had struck this "How'm I doin'?" city. It had turned the streets and sidewalks into griddles — hot, humid, harrowing. While we were walking to lunch one day on a crowded street, a crazed stranger suddenly strikes an uncomprehending woman full in the mouth. No one can react until the second blow has driven a dull, bloody thud into our dazed consciousness. There is only time to lunge before a third blow, and the crazed one escapes into the throng. The woman's wounds will be measured for seasons.

Near the 42nd Street bus terminal thousands stream in courseless configurations. A friendly handbill is being distributed, a mustard-colored invitation to escape the city streets. It announces "Skirmish USA," the "Poconos Friendly 'War' Game: Exciting, Challenging, Competitive." "Skirmish" boasts of being the adult version of capture the flag. The leaflet pictures smiling men and women in army camouflage fatigues, intent, but buoyant in camaraderie. "Imagination is all that is needed to find a 'foe.' " "Everything you need to play Skirmish is supplied. The new Mach I *pistol* . . . . holds over 30 pellets powered by a standard C02 cartridge. The pellets are soft, round gelatin capsules filled with water soluble coloring. They are made by a leading drug company, and break easily on contact. They are non-toxic, biodegradable and wash off easily." "There's a sharp crack behind you," the brochure writes effectively. "A twig? A shot? Your heart drops with a thud . . . . Ssssplat! Your shoulder and chest are splattered with red goo. You've been hit! You're marked and out of the game." There is, we're told, an infinite variety of play (but always, always one conclusion). A two-hour game can be scheduled for $15. "You'll be among friends . . . . at least until the action starts!" And afterwards, you can go whitewater rafting: "You'll sleep like a rock, and you'll never be the same again."

Ssssplat! Out of the game. In El Salvador. In San Ysidro. At the Shatt al Arab. In East Timor. This summer.

A woman, New York City crime widow and welfare mother, writes at the same time in the *Times*, "I lost my husband a year ago in a street shooting and robbery. Since then, after my one child started attending kindergarten, I have been seeking work . . . " She has not found it. For her and her child, the round pellets have not washed out. For her and thousands like her, the real skirmish is still on. Where is the camaraderie, where the helpers?

There is a river, scarlet, that descends from a different mountain than the Poconos. It washes the streets of New York, San Ysidro, and San Salvador. It is silent, incomprehensible, and unnoticed. Yet it binds those who play "Skirmish," those who walk the city streets, those who labor in sorrow and ceaselessly without pay. It is the water that can wash all tears from our eyes, void the canyons of our divisions, and flood the lethargy of our consciences. But to heal, it must be drawn up and tasted.

Election '84

CONVENTIONAL GHOSTS

YOU CAN'T EAT MEMORIES

WERE THE MOST important delegates to the Democratic national convention ghosts? A film on the life of Eleanor Roosevelt sent young women rushing around with Eleanor Roosevelt Centennial posters attached to their Mondale or Hart signs. FDR was there, of course, recalled in speeches by Senators Hart, Kennedy, and Sarbanes, Governor

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In keeping with *Commonweal*'s usual summer schedule, only one issue will be published during the month of August. The next issue will be dated September 7, after which regular biweekly publication will be resumed.

Cuomo and the Reverend Jackson. Those with a predilection for esoterica dredged up the 1920 San Francisco Democratic convention, where FDR was the vice-presidential nominee, and where women were delegates for the first time. H. L. Mencken wrote of that convention that the crowds would go wild when the band played "Oh, You Beautiful Doll" or "Oh, What a Pal Was Mary."

Then there was the slide show on Truman in honor of *his* centennial. One reporter managed to call Cuomo "Adlai Stevenson with garlic." JFK's presence was evoked by Ted Kennedy, Jr.'s speech on behalf of the handicapped and, of course, by his father's introduction of Mondale. Similar family honors were performed by Governor Charles Robb who reminded folks of his father-in-law, LBJ, and by Martin Luther King, Sr., who recalled his slain son, as did the presence of Coretta Scott King and the words of Jesse Jackson and Geraldine Ferraro. Jimmy Carter was not exactly a ghost, although some people feared he might be a shadow (and then there was the altogether very real Bert Lance). Mondale himself was a living reminder of his fellow Minnesotan, Hubert Horatio Humphrey.

Reviving the "greats" was one of the most satisfying exercises for the conventioneers. It consistently got jaded observers to stand up and cheer right alongside the fresh first-timers. It could be corny but it often had more substance than Ronald Reagan's effort to present himself as a son of both FDR and Calvin Coolidge. As Chairman of the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Committee in 1982 and currently a member of the steering committee for the Truman centennial, I would not be one to minimize the importance of honoring the past.

Still, the old names present a problem. Gary Hart touches on it when he says the party cannot run on nostalgia. The truth is that many of these names are only that — names — to voters under thirty-five. Jim Rowe, who died just before the convention and had been the last surviving intimate of FDR, had an apt comment on this problem. For young or even middle-aged men to be intensely interested in FDR today, he noted, would have been similar to his being interested in Grover Cleveland — and Rowe said he could not have cared less about that "great Democrat"!

It is a delicate balance that the party and its leaders must attain: a decent respect for the past but without worshipping it. It is much like what must take place in families where an elderly patriarch has been successful. Children and grandchildren have to make their own way; those who rely exceedingly on the successes or reputations of their predecessors are destined to fail pathetically.

Achieving that balance is an art. In the Democrats' case, the artistry involves the Democratic leaders' efforts to present themselves as guides to the future as well as heirs of a tradition. Just as Mondale took his cue on a female vice-president from Jesse Jackson, he seems to have taken his "future" campaign theme from Hart. Since this is politics and not the patent office, such appropriations are fair. But at first glance, Mondale's attempts appear contrived and awkward. It would be reassuring, for instance, to hear Mondale really discuss what he believes is this generation's "rendezvous with destiny."

In a sense, the Democratic candidate has to be a blend of the properly respectful legatee and the irreverent, audacious pioneer. But after five days at the Democratic convention, I had the impression that this party and its leadership had not yet learned to feel comfortable with both its tradition and its vision. It was easier to honor the dead than to settle with the living, to celebrate a past than to specify policies. If Mondale and Ferraro are to gain credibility and to win, it won't be done solely by insisting on where the Democratic party has been; they must show a more certain grasp of where they want the country to go.

PETER KOVLER

(Besides serving on the various anniversary committees mentioned in this report, Peter Kovler terms himself a fanatic partisan of the Mondale-Ferraro ticket.)

Abortion & election

PATCHY GARMENT

HOW MANY VOTES HAS BERNARDIN?

LIKE MOST of my compatriots and nearly all my co-partisans, I too rejoiced, both as an American and as a Democrat, when Walter Mondale named Geraldine Ferraro as his running mate. It was a great day in the history of the nation and the party. And if I thought I could get away with it, I'd add an "o" or an "i" at the end of my last name and rejoice as an Italo-American, too — among the side benefits of the Ferraro candidacy is that she will replace Michael Corleone as the most famous American of Italian descent.

But if Ferraro is a triumphant symbol of the emergence of women and Italo-Americans, she is at the same time a striking symbol of the inefficacy of the "seamless garment" school of political thought. I borrow the expression of course from Cardinal Joseph Bernardin of Chicago, who has argued that concern for life may not be selective, that to be consistently pro-life one should be against abortion, capital punishment, and nuclear arms — all three, not just one or two of the three.

But the seamless garment notion is appealing not simply because it links these three specifics. For people like me, it serves to situate the Catholic anti-abortion position within what may loosely be called a liberal or progressive framework of political thinking, and to rescue it from the conservative or right-wing ideology within which it is frequently found, e.g., that of Jerry Falwell and his Moral Majority. At the same time,

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it is an attempt to remind those liberals or progressives who are normally on the side of the angels when it comes to issues of social justice and world peace that they are guilty of a fatal inconsistency if they are at the same time pro-choice or (to use the indelicate expression for the same thing) pro-abortion.

Ferraro, as the media have not ceased to remind us ever since her name was first floated as a vice-presidential possibility, is both pro-choice on abortion and Roman Catholic — and not just incidentally Catholic, but a graduate of Marymount College in Manhattan back in the days when Catholic colleges were thoroughly, sometimes oppressively, Catholic. Like other influential Catholic political liberals, e.g., Ted Kennedy and Tip O'Neill, she's a disappointment to the anti-abortion cause. Her pro-life garment displays a conspicuous pro-choice patch.

For those of us who are anti-abortion it is often difficult to understand how an intelligent person who has given serious thought to the issue can honestly support the abortion-on-demand position legitimized by the United States Supreme Court. That adult women should wish to be free to determine their own sexual conduct is easy to understand, as is their desire to decide which medical/surgical procedures they will or will not submit to. It is also not hard to understand, whatever the problems of moral theology involved, that women feel they should have the right to abort in difficult cases, cases involving rape, incest, and probable serious birth defects, for example, especially when such abortions are done early in the pregnancy. But none of these considerations help us understand why anyone would favor abortion on demand, that is, the right to have an abortion at anytime, no matter how late in the pregnancy, and for any reason, no matter how trivial. How can anyone deny, we wonder, that in the last, say, two-thirds of the pregnancy, there is a significant degree of probability that the life to be terminated is that of a human being?

But put philosophical considerations aside for the moment and consider the politics of abortion. If you are a nationally significant politician, or aspire to be one, and you'd like to be, à la Cardinal Bernardin, both liberal and anti-abortion, you'll find you have a microscopically small constituency. The liberals will disown you, since you can't be one of them without being a feminist, and you can't be a feminist without being pro-choice. And the conservatives won't receive you, since no matter how right you may be on the abortion question, you're still wrong, from their point of view, on a hundred and one other questions. You will, of course, be well thought of among many Catholic bishops, but there is little evidence to date that their prayers are efficacious in the way of delivering votes or campaign contributions. The simple fact is that if Geraldine Ferraro had elected to be an anti-abortion liberal there's not a chance in the world she would have attained her current elevated status. The seamless garment may lead the pack philosophically, but politically it's a nonstarter.

None of this is to suggest that there is anything insincere or merely expedient about Rep. Ferraro's pro-choice stance. We politicians, like almost everyone else in the world, normally believe sincerely in those positions which it is expedient for us to adopt.

It is of course not the job of bishops to supply a political constituency for the social doctrines they enunciate. But without a large and influential constituency, doctrines of public morality, no matter how sound, can be no more than interesting speculative propositions. The Ferraro phenomenon highlights the absence of anything resembling an effective constituency for the seamless garment point of view, and it demonstrates the need to begin the long-term political spadework and brainwork required to create that constituency.

DAVID R. CARLIN, JR.

(David R. Carlin, Jr., a senator in the Rhode Island state legislature, is the author of "The Dilemma of an Anti-Abortion Democrat" [Nov. 18, 1983] and many other articles in Commonweal. *)*

Of several minds: *John Garvey*

GUNS & BUTTER

DR. SEUSS'S LIBERAL SENTIMENTALITY

DR. SEUSS has just published a book, *The Butter Battle* (Random House, $6.95) which introduces children to the arms race. Part of me finds this objectionable: leave kids alone; let them get at least to their teenage years before giving them concrete reasons for desperation. I wonder how much our attempt to make our children politically aware, politically correct, is in reality a way of assuaging our own guilts. If we have produced moral children we ourselves must be pure, or at least on the right track . . . this, anyway, is a tempting thought for a lot of us. It backfires. A friend of mine, devoted to nonviolence, was recently perplexed when her son, who does not have any toy guns to play with, was seen aiming a flower at various innocent bystanders and shooting them with it.

Children are violent like the rest of us. Violence is something which is civilized out of us. It is often a losing battle, civilization involving both Chartres and the Crusades, the Sermon on the Mount and the Jihad. Anyone who has watched babies play with one another knows that if it weren't for civilization it would be all Crusades, all Jihad. Civilization has done a little (not nearly enough) to even the odds between our propensity to do damage to anyone who contradicts our will and our desire to survive and cooperate. Nothing is less realistic than those Franciscan ads in which a child of five, asked what he most dearly longs for,

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lisps, "World peace." You know some parent is standing behind that angelic baby with a pointed stick, urging the right answer which is not, "I want to see Tommy Ryan break both his arms."

The Butter Battle is, I suppose, an effort to begin this civilization by doing a kind of consciousness-raising among children before the militarists get to them. Fair enough. The idea that children should be dragged early into the political arena is one I am willing to bracket. Something else bothers me about the book, which is about two groups of typically funny-looking Seuss creatures who live with a wall between them. On one side of the wall people (or critters) butter their bread on the bottom; on the other side they butter it on top. On this difference the two sides base hatreds for each other, and build ever-increasingly destructive weapons, moving towards ultimate destruction. The book's description of the illogical nature of the arms race is uncomfortably true: there really is something crazy about what we have done and continue to do.

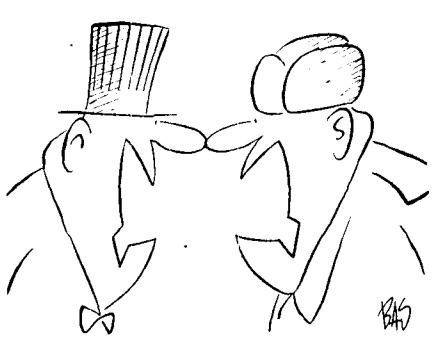
My discomfort isn't with that part of the story. It is rather with the cute conceit which precedes it. If life were only a matter of two fuzzy bunches of warm bodies whose difference consisted in which sides of the bread they liked to put their butter on, things would be so much simpler — almost as simple as they are in *The Butter Battle*. In a world in which all values are matters of taste, subjective preference, it really is crazy to think of killing or dying for anything at all. If it all comes down to which side of the bread you butter, of course it is mad (or, in child-terms, just plain silly) to build weapons and aim them at one another.

Let's rewrite the book. On one side of the wall people who don't believe in butter at all are put into prison, and some of them are killed. On the other side, people whose color is wrong are forced into poverty, and those who protest are tortured.

I don't mean any analogies here between existing superpowers, except to say that each has plenty with which to charge the other, and that the differences are quite serious. They matter deeply, much more than the difference involved in buttering bread on the top or on the bottom. Neither superpower, of the two that now threaten to grind the rest of the world underneath, is blameless. Far from it. The American presence in Vietnam, the Russian presence in Afghanistan, the American support of right-wing dictators and the Russian support of left-wing dictators, all of this is ugly — but it involves something substantial, something which in fact matters deeply. I believe that no Christian has the right to give unqualified allegiance to any country, or to identify the cause of God with the victory of any particular political ideology. To speak of the Soviets as "an evil empire" in a way which implies that we represent the forces of light is a move towards idolatry.

But at the same time, there are distinctions which must be made. Our inability to know what really is happening to Sakharov, our knowledge of what has happened to religious prisoners in the Soviet Union — these understandings matter as much as our understanding of America's terrible role in Latin America, its support of anti-democratic forces wherever there is, the suspicion that American interests might be threatened, its unwillingness to listen to the experience of other nations, and its insistence on its own innocence. The world may burn in a conflict between Soviet paranoia and American innocence, but what it suffers for and maybe dies for will be something rather more important than what side of the bread gets buttered.

We are responsible for doing what we can do about evils on both sides of whatever borders exist; but this means, at the very least, admitting that there are evils. And inasmuch as there are evils, there are also goods. There are standards against which we must measure things. It is right to delight in the victory of an Alfonsin in Argentina, and to protest the imprisonment of Father Gleb Yakunin and the persecution of Sakharov in the Soviet Union. It is right to protest the funding of terrorists in Nicaragua, and to encourage the hope which Solidarity brings to the people of Poland.



It may seem unfair to poor Dr. Seuss to single him out as an object lesson in liberal sentimentality. But in fact his latest book suggests something that exists at certain levels of liberal thought, and has existed there for years. The major problem, according to this line of thinking, is that we don't understand one another. What if we do? What if we do, and hate what the other guy thinks? What if our understanding of the other's values is based on such real and ugly things as the Gulag, or Vietnam, or genocide? There are, after all, things worth caring a lot about. I agree that the arms race is a tragic absurdity. But it isn't there for any frivolous reason. No one is good here, no one innocent. The innocence of butter up or down, nice as it would be, isn't anywhere close to what is true about our world. The values that divide us from the Soviet system, as well as the actions which contradict our own professed devotion to freedom and democracy, are important — it isn't a matter of learning simply to accept our differences.

The question is rather whether we can learn and teach forms of resistance to evil which will not inevitably lead to violence. There are examples, in our century, of effective nonviolent resistance: the Danish resistance to the Nazis, Gandhi's role in the liberation of India, and the continuing existence of Solidarity. (If Solidarity had decided on violence as a tool, it would have been crushed at birth.) We must indeed teach our children that the arms race is something which cannot be allowed to continue; but at the same time we must teach them that there are values which cannot be compromised and evils which must be resisted. To believe that nonviolent resistance is necessary for our world may seem utopian, until you face the fact that the alternative is racial suicide. The truly utopian belief is that we can go on as we are, and nothing will go wrong.

JOHN GARVEY

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The end of Catholicism?

David Tracy & Andrew M. Greeley respond to Thomas Sheehan

RUDOLF Schnackenburg, Raymond E. Brown, Roland Murphy, Pierre Benoit, John P. Meier, J.A. Fitzmyer, David M. Stanley, Rudolf Pesch, Walter Kasper, David Tracy, Edward Schillebeeckx, Hans Küng . . . . Do these scholars "and hundreds of others" constitute a "liberal consensus" of Catholic theologians and exegetes that has accomplished nothing less than "the dismantling of traditional Roman Catholic theology"? That is the view of Thomas Sheehan, a professor of philosophy at Chicago's Loyola University, writing in the June 14 issue of the *New York Review of Books*. Indeed, according to Sheehan, the work of this "liberal consensus" is even "bringing the Church to what can be called the end of Catholicism."

Sheehan's depiction of what the *New York Review* announced on its cover as a "REVOLUTION IN CATHOLICISM" obviously merits further discussion. *Commonweal* is pleased to publish here the responses of two noted Catholic thinkers, preceded by our own summary of Sheehan's argument.

Thomas Sheehan's starting point is the adoption by Catholic scholars of "scientific exegesis of the New Testament." This, he says, has led them to conclusions which "conflict sharply with traditional Catholic doctrine." Sheehan mentions questions raised by exegetes about the Virgin Birth, the Infancy Narratives, and Jesus's miracles. But the bulk of his attention is focused on the exegetes' conclusions ("now common teaching," he reports, in Catholic seminaries) that "Jesus of Nazareth did not assert any of the divine or messianic claims the Gospels attribute to him and that he died without believing he was Christ or the Son of God, not to mention the founder of a new religion." Jesus knew nothing of preexistence or the Trinity, ordained no priests or bishops, and established no church. Instead he saw himself as a Jewish prophet proclaiming to his fellow Jews alone the dawning kingdom of God. Sheehan compares "this kind of whittling away at belief in the divinity of Jesus" to earlier developments in liberal Protestantism.

As an example of this "new reading of Christianity," Sheehan presents Hans Küng's recent book *Eternal Life*? and, in particular Küng's "deconstructive analysis of the Biblical data behind the Christian belief that Jesus was raised from the dead" — and that eternal life is promised to his followers. Küng "says nothing that we cannot find elsewhere in modern Roman Catholic exegesis," namely, that the Gospel accounts of Jesus's post-resurrection appearances and of the empty tomb are inconsistent "later stories." They express, "in imaginative and symbolic language," the disciples' "belief that Jesus was somehow alive with God and would someday reappear," but they cannot be taken literally. What Küng's book does, says Sheehan, is to reduce all scriptural "proofs for Jesus's resurrection— or for eternal life — to a hope that "life has an ultimate meaning" and that "if there is a God, he will save the whole of you."

At this point, concludes Sheehan, "Küng (or, for that matter, the liberal consensus) has pushed Catholic theology . . . to the point where one can ask what its teachings have to offer that cannot be found outside the scope of its experience and discourse." Hope in immortality, the religious experience of transcendence, or the natural human experience that satisfies many people as sufficient meaning for life — all can be found outside the church. "What does Catholicism claim that makes it unique, essentially different from non-Catholic religious and non-religious humanism?"

The church may answer "supernatural revelation" and argue that even "if the scientifically controllable evidence of scripture does not show, for example, that Jesus was divine," nonetheless, the "authentic sense of revelation" is to be found in the apostolic tradition and those entrusted to maintain and interpret it, the bishops and the pope. But for Sheehan this response won't do. It remains trapped in a "hermeneutical circle": claims to be the authentic interpreters of scripture must be based on the interpreters' own interpretation of scripture; revelation is said to authenticate faith, but faith is needed to authenticate revelation. This circularity — some would call it the reinvention by the liberal consensus of "the Protestant wheel" — is producing "the end of Catholicism." Once having accepted non-fundamentalist, scientific methods of

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studying scripture, scholars like Küng are led to treat questions like immortality in terms of "a kind of 'pious agnosticism.'" "Even the Christian believer who takes Jesus as his or her model is still thrown back on the same finite information as the non-believer, and the same human tasks: providing for one's own needs, overcoming one's selfishness, making the social and political order more human." In effect, Christianity may be a useful "myth" which "inspires some people to do what all human beings should do: be sensitive, intelligent, reasonable, loving, and just."

How, asks Sheehan at this point, can one understand the church's momentum despite the fact that "the liberal consensus has pushed Catholic theology to the point where it seems to break down"? Largely, he answers, in terms of "the church's gradual shift of concern away from theoretical questions and toward social, political, and moral issues like nuclear warfare, abortion, and liberation theology," a shift he calls "one of the major consequences of the undoing of traditional theology."

Things may continue as currently: Rome slapping "a few more wrists in a futile effort to stop the liberal movements launched by the Second Vatican Council"; conservatives entrenched in "their shrinking pockets of power"; liberal exegesis and theology advancing in scholarly circles; and the social gospel vigorously pursued. But Sheehan also poses the possibility that the "liberal consensus" could push "beyond its limits," abandon belief in Jesus's resurrection and in any afterlife, and return to "the pre-apocalyptic faith of the prophets with its moral, social, and political concerns."

Sheehan's article, it should be noted, is written with considerable sympathy for these exegetical and theological developments. He speaks of them as Catholic theology's "most vigorous intellectual renaissance since the high Middle Ages." He clearly admires the liberals' scholarship and intentions. All this lends credibility to the author's ultimately rather devastating view of the current developments' limits and implications. Such sympathy may even obscure, for some readers, the otherwise striking fact that Sheehan's conclusions coincide with two major conservative charges against liberal, post-conciliar theology: (a) that it eventually empties Catholicism of all distinctive belief; and (b) that it stimulates political, social, and economic activism as a compensation for doctrinal uncertainty.

Obviously, Sheehan's article raises major questions about the state of Catholic theology. To what extent is his account of the "liberal consensus" accurate or complete? Does the commitment of the "liberal consensus" to scientific methods of scriptural scholarship really lead to the impasse he describes? Is its natural destination finally a vague "pious agnosticism" or a conventional liberal humanism, perhaps inspired by a subjectively appealing "myth"? We discussed these and other questions with several Catholic scholars. Two of them have very kindly provided responses to the Sheehan article. We hope the discussion will continue.

THE EDITORS

EXEGESIS, TRADITION, & AUTHORITY

Levels of liberal consensus

DAVID TRACY

THOMAS SHEEHAN'S RECENT article on "Revolution in Catholicism" in the *New York Review of Books* (June 14, 1984) has caused a stir. Announcements of revolution tend to do that. Announcements of how the present "liberal consensus" in Catholic theology has occasioned the loss of any distinctively Catholic vision of reality are even more likely to unleash the furies. But before Catholics United for the Faith and *The Wanderer* (and their mysterious Vatican subscribers) rush to the fray brandishing the *New York Review,* no less, as Exhibit A of all their fears (or hopes?), some further reflections on Sheehan's interpretations seem in order.

My own response to Sheehan's article is offered, I admit, with some misgivings. My major misgiving is this: I am a great admirer of Thomas Sheehan (and an occasional acquaintance). It seems somehow ungracious (or, at least, ungrateful) to comment on his work publicly only when I basically disagree with it. The fact is that Thomas Sheehan's technical work on Heidegger has aided me and many others greatly in trying to understand that modern classic. The further fact is that Sheehan's previous articles in the *New York Review* on Catholic theology, especially his extraordinary article on Karl Rahner ("The Dream of Karl Rahner," Feb. 4, 1982) have been, quite simply, the best articles that journal has published on religion or theology. So, in good Catholic fashion, I confess: I would rather write an article on how good Thomas Sheehan's other *New York Review* articles and his Heidegger work are. But those articles, alas, did not cause the stir that this recent article did. The reasons why this is so can probably be filed under what theologians call "the human situation."

But here I think Thomas Sheehan will agree with me. The issues he raises in this recent article are too important, and the interpretations he gives of where Catholic theology is going

FATHER DAVID TRACY *is a professor of theology at the University of Chicago. A contributor to many journals, he is the author of* Blessed Rage for Order: New Pluralism in Theology *and* The Analogical Imagination: Christian Theology and the Culture of Pluralism *(both Crossroad Books).*

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too troubling, not to respond. So, with apologies, if such be needed, to a thinker and writer I admire, here goes.

I began reading Sheehan's latest article with high expectations. But I soon sensed something had gone awry. The analysis seemed unfocused and finally confused. It is possible, of course, that I became confused — or, worse, unnerved — by his portrait of what the "liberal consensus" in Catholic theology really leads to. It is possible but, as I hope to persuade him, not likely.

A good deal of the article, to be sure, demonstrates Sheehan's proven virtues: for example, his brief but clear history of the impact of Pius XII's encyclical *Divino Afflante Spiritu* for Catholic biblical scholarship and what a difference it made. But then something strange happens and keeps happening throughout the rest of the article until the reader reaches the curious, not to say weird, conclusion about where the liberal consensus could end, with Sheehan speculating on whether the church could "shelve" its belief in Jesus's and our resurrection and concentrate on "intrinsic moral, social, and political concerns" in what Sheehan terms "Pascal's wager in reverse."

What I think went wrong is something like this: a review of Hans Küng's book *On Eternal Life*? became the occasion for reflection on the wider "liberal consensus" in Catholic theology. Fair enough. But what is this "consensus" and what does it mean for Catholic theology?

At first, Sheehan suggests that the consensus is a consensus on "the new approach that Catholic scholars are taking to Jesus and the scriptures." The consensus consists in "the scientific methods employed and the conclusions generated." Moreover the consensus is "not on a body of dogmas but on the questions to be asked and the methods for answering them." Finally, the "consensus allows wide-ranging internal dispute, but it draws lines that include certain presuppositions and exclude others."

Again, fair enough. It is the case that Catholic scholars use historico-critical methods in their exegesis and that the conclusions they reach do sometimes contradict traditional understandings of what the scriptures mean. However, it is worth noting that the internal disputes presently occurring in the liberal consensus (as anyone knows who has read the representative authors Sheehan lists) are not exercises in the "narcissism of small differences." The disputes at the moment are central. They include disputes, first, on the understanding of the methods employed. Note the present battle between those biblical scholars who employ historico-critical methods alone and those who insist that literary-critical methods or methods of ideology-critique are necessary for understanding what, for example, the parables as parables actually mean. Second, there are also inevitably disputes on the conclusions arrived at. Not all the "startling" conclusions listed by Sheehan are representative of widespread scholarly consensus — for example, on how to interpret the still highly controverted "Son of Man" sayings. These are, I think, important qualifications worth noting about the liberal consensus. Still, Sheehan is correct to insist that anyone who accepts the historico-critical method at all is, in some sense, part of the "liberal consensus" on how scholars interpret the scriptures.

As Rudolf Bultmann once observed, if you so much as question a literal reading of the trumpet at the Last Judgment, you have the same set of problems as the rest of us. Use the historico-critical method at all on the scriptures and you're on the way to joining the "liberal consensus." Refuse to use it at all and you're on your way to enlisting in fundamentalism.

So Sheehan is right, I think, in his basic description of the liberal consensus for interpreting the scriptures. I wish, however, that he spent more time on these scholars' methods and questions rather than on simply listing some of their conclusions. And was it really necessary to list those conclusions with minimal explanation of their meaning and a maximal use of rhetorical shock value? An example: "Today, for example, one would be hard pressed to find a Catholic biblical scholar who maintains that Jesus thought he was the divine Son of God who preexisted from all eternity as the second person of the Trinity before he became a human being." This is true, but something more surely needs to be said before an unwary reader leaps to the conclusion: "Oh, these scholars now deny the divinity of Christ and the reality of the Trinity." The fact is that one would be hard-pressed to find a Catholic biblical scholar who denies either. They believe those doctrines even while holding that, on the scriptural evidence alone as interpreted through historico-critical methods, the historian as historian can hardly be expected to know much about what Jesus actually thought. Moreover, given the nature of the scriptures as confessional documents, the historian can reach the plausible conclusion that in many cases it is more likely that statements attributed to Jesus were added by the Christian believers who wrote these texts to affirm their faith in Jesus Christ rather than made by Jesus himself.

AFTER THIS INTERPRETATION of the liberal consensus, the article heads out to sea. And confusion spreads. Sheehan moves quickly through several other issues and makes several points on loosely related controversial questions (e.g. what is "proof"? what is "supernatural revelation"? what did the "folk religion" of popular Catholicism really hold?). One becomes confused by all these issues which are somehow related (how?) to the earlier more narrowly defined issue of a "liberal consensus" on scriptural methods. Confusion, for me, became sheer disbelief when I then read the following lines in the middle of the article. "But it seems to me that in all his theological efforts, Küng (or, for that matter, the liberal consensus) has pushed Catholic theology to the limits of its own language. In fact, he has brought it to the point where one can ask what its teachings have to offer that cannot be found outside the scope of its experience and discourse."

Now, what does all this mean? I thought we were talking about the liberal consensus on scriptural scholarship among Catholic exegetes and theologians and how Küng is clearly committed to that consensus and exemplifies it in his new book. But suddenly "Catholic theology" is unraveling. It seems that this earlier "consensus" has been expanded be-

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yond its clear and limited range to include a "consensus" on the theological method in its entirety and that the latter, in turn, has brought Catholic theology "to the limits of its own language" and the loss of its own distinctiveness. Really?

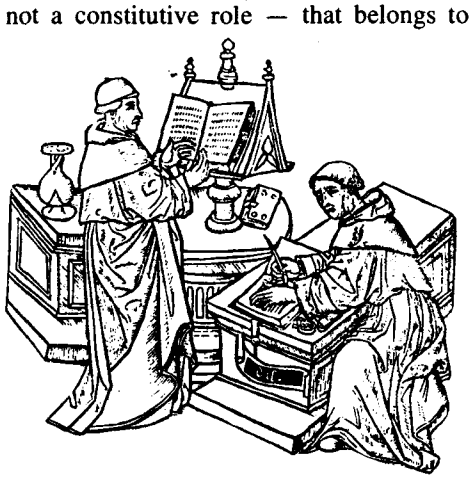
Until Thomas Sheehan fills in the gaps in his interpretation, which moves all too quickly from an earlier "liberal consensus" on the methods of scriptural exegesis, to discussions of "proofs," to brief descriptions of revelation and faith, to puzzling characterizations of "Protestants" and Catholic "folk religion," to announcements that perhaps there's nothing distinctive left in Catholic Christianity, to facile distinctions between "intellectual" and "activist" enterprises, to curious "what if" arguments leading to "Pascal in reverse," I do not believe I (or he) should be persuaded by his analysis.

What the texts he cites, (including Hans Küng's new book) and the issues he raises show, I suggest, can be described in alternative terms like the following:

1. There is a consensus in scriptural scholarship among Catholic exegetes and theologians which can be described in the terms Sheehan provides with the two qualifications added above.

2. This consensus applies to a relatively limited area of the fuller range of Catholic theology: specifically, to how one interprets the scriptures and the "historical Jesus" (not simply "Jesus," as Sheehan states). The "historical Jesus" *means* that knowledge of Jesus which can be reached through the use of modern historico-critical methods. The "historical Jesus," therefore, is a technical term to be distinguished from (a) the Jesus of Nazareth who actually lived; (b) the memory-images of Jesus maintained by and shaped by the early communities and redactors which can also be reconstructed by historico-critical methods; and (c) the Jesus Christ of faith — witnessed to in the scriptures, the entire tradition, and in an individual or community's present experience of Jesus Christ in word and sacrament.

3. On the whole (i.e., allowing for many "internal disputes") Catholic theologians have been wary of according too great a theological role to the results of exegesis on the "historical Jesus." On the whole, these exegetical results serve genuinely corrective but not constitutive functions in Catholic theology. This is true even for Küng and Schillebeeckx who do accord an important corrective role to "historical Jesus" research but not a constitutive role — that belongs to Jesus Christ. Why? Because, even on strictly hermeneutical grounds, the central christological affirmation is: "I/We believe in Jesus Christ with the apostles." This Catholic confession of faith does not read "We believe in the historical Jesus"; nor "We believe in the Christ principle"; nor "We believe *in* the apostles." The christological confession reads — and means — what it says. It means, therefore, that an individual has a personal trust (faith) in Jesus Christ in present experience. As one reflects on that belief in Jesus Christ, one may also realize that one fundamentally trusts in the tradition which mediates that faith to us in word, sacrament, and action. For Catholics (and indeed most mainline Christians) tradition is also thereby fundamentally trusted. Tradition is trusted as the principal mediator of that faith in Jesus Christ. The church is the bearer of that tradition to us from the "apostles." (The New Testament was first described as the "apostolic writings.") We believe *in* Jesus Christ *with* the apostles. That's what the confession says and, theologically, that's also what it means.



ALL OF THIS is, I believe, clearly Catholic — i.e., a fundamental trust in the tradition, the church, the apostolic witness as entailed by one's faith in Jesus Christ. What is new in modern Catholic theology is a greater recognition that the tradition which is fundamentally trusted as the mediator of this faith is also, like all traditions, ambiguous and thereby in constant need of correction and self-reform.

Theologically, the prophetic strand in the Catholic tradition impels self-criticism and self-reform on its own religious and theological grounds. The church is also the "church always in need of reformation" (*ecclesia semper reformanda*). Vatican II was a major expression of precisely this ecclesial self-recognition. The Catholic theologians to whom Sheehan directs our attention follow Vatican II, and consent to that self-reforming principle. This does not mean that they no longer trust the tradition or the church. It does mean that, on the church's own theological self-understanding, they see the church as open to correction, challenge, purification from any source which can aid its reform. One such source (there are many others) is the use of historico-critical methods on the church's own normative witness, the scriptures. It follows that the results of that exegesis can (and often do) correct, refine, develop, and challenge traditional ecclesial self-understandings. It does not follow that exegisis can (or should) simply replace the tradition. Theologically, it is all more complicated than that — as Sheehan's earlier article on Rahner showed.

Theologians present their scholarly, independent arguments and interpretations (including, as part of a larger whole, their scriptural interpretations) to the wider community of inquiry called theology for critical assessment. If theologians also believe that their conclusions have relevance, for example, as "developments" or "correctives," for the wider ecclesial community, they will also present their results in appropriate form to that community. Here they will have to face a further question for interpretation: how to interpret the nature of the

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ecclesial community and its responsible authority or authorities. Because Catholic theologians fundamentally trust the tradition (i.e., they believe *in* Jesus Christ *with* the apostles), they are likely to enter the present fray on how to understand the church theologically. This inevitably involves, for the Catholic theologian, some interpretation of how to understand the various authorities in church and tradition: scripture, doctrines, councils, papal and episcopal pronouncements, theological opinions, discernments of the sense of the faithful, etc.

Cardinal Baum, for example, whom Sheehan cites, has one clear theological interpretation of how this should happen. Others (myself included) have different interpretations. Even among the exegetes and theologians whom Sheehan cites as members of the "liberal consensus" there is very little real consensus on this particular step in the theological enterprise (unlike the real consensus on scriptural interpretation). If that seems unlikely, then read Walter Kasper and Hans Küng (both listed by Sheehan as part of the consensus) on one another's proposals. The "liberal consensus" on scriptural interpretation, in sum, is in no way equivalent to a "consensus" on the nature of the theological method in its entirety, much less on particular theological interpretations of church, church order, and ecclesial authorities.

Catholic theologians make proposals to the church that they claim to be either developments of traditional understandings (recall the many proposals for "development of doctrine") or reinterpretations of the tradition which, they claim, are better understandings of what the tradition really meant even when it did not say it (the de-literalizing of traditional apocalyptic language Sheehan mentions is a good example here). Sometimes they propose correctives or even challenges to the traditional self-understanding (as when Küng proposes to correct traditional notions of infallibility by substituting the category "the indefectibility of the church in spite of errors"). Any one of these logically distinct kinds of proposals may be made to

EXISTENTIAL TRUST

HANS KÜNG'S REASONABLE BELIEF

ON ONE OTHER question raised by Sheehan, there is, I think, more consensus than he allows: namely, on what reason and argument can hope to achieve. I do not know why he keeps mentioning "proofs" and contrasting them with "softer" modes of reasonable argument. Perhaps this is a merely semantic problem. Yet Sheehan's reading of Küng's position on "reasonable trust" in Jesus's resurrection and in eternal life leads me to believe that it is not. If we are really to retrieve neo-Scholastic notions of deductive theological "proofs" in order to be counted as Catholic, then we should all join Msgr. George Kelly's crusade as soon as possible. The problem is that the neo-Scholastic "proofs" do not prove anything. And "reason" in almost all modern discussions of "rationality" and all uses of argument in all the disciplines, has rendered these traditional neo-Scholastic notions of proof at best marginal, at worst self-deluding.

Küng's notion of "reasonable trust," moreover, is not reducible to merely "existential meaningfulness." We can only, with Aristotle, argue in accordance with the nature of the evidence and the degree of certitude or probability which the given subject matter allow. Küng knows this and, in all his work, is careful to show what the evidence is, why a position can't be strictly proved or disproved, and what a reasonable position is (including one of reasonable trust and hope where these are rationally justified).

On questions like the resurrection of Jesus or eternal life, if you demand more than that, you will guarantee less. Küng trusts in faith and hope, in the resurrection of Jesus. Küng argues, on grounds appropriate to the question, that this is a reasonable belief to hold. Küng interprets the resurrection of Jesus in fundamentally Pauline rather than Lucan terms. He argues energetically for that interpretation. Küng correlates that trust in the resurrection of Jesus as a "concrete pledge" of hope in eternal life with arguments for and against that hope on more general philosophical grounds. If one disagrees with any evidence, warrants, or backings in Küng's complex set of arguments, or any interpretation of scripture in his exegesis, one is perfectly able to argue back.

But is it really illuminating of the possible problems of liberal Catholic theology (and there are problems for all of us) to subject it to the kind of "what if" questions Sheehan poses about Küng — what if he abandoned his case for resurrection, leading to "Pascal's wager in reverse"?

These questions usually sound better than they are: What if we say there wasn't a real Jonah and a real whale, then doesn't all our belief in scripture collapse? Answer: no. What if these liberals will one day eliminate all belief in the scriptures and the tradition, what then? The answer seems obvious: then we will have proposals for a post-Catholic or even post-Christian theology (like Mary Daly's explicitly post-Christian proposals). Until then we should argue with the theology proposed. In short, we should make our arguments not on the "what if" basis of what Hans Küng might some day say if he said something entirely different from what he does say. We should make them on the basis of what Küng actually says. Otherwise, we're back in never-never land with "arguments" like: What if Thomas Sheehan would one day say that there is no "liberal consensus" on Catholic scriptural interpretation, what then? Zeno's paradox in reverse?

DAVID TRACY

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It Might Work?

. . . It is easy to see why the White House might hold that excising the Sandinistas is the most direct route to a solution in El Salvador. Not only would it eliminate what the president terms a Soviet and Cuban "base." Not only would it cut off the arms supply the administration persists in believing is the key to Salvadoran insurgency. It would also teach an unmistakable lesson: even if revolutionaries do take power in El Salvador or elsewhere, they are not going to retain it . . . says the full military might of the United States.

Many have warned that this strategy, possibly involving a major Nicaraguan "incursion" by Honduran troops, and an expanded army of Nicaraguan *contras*, with U.S. logistical, communication, and air support, might entail fierce fighting, acquiescence in a post-victory bloodbath, prolonged repression of social and nationalist aspirations, and enormous long-range damage to America's world posture. For all these reasons, they conclude, it won't work. We agree with the warnings but are not sure about the conclusion. A "Reagan Doctrine" might in fact "work" in Central America, in the same way the Brezhnev Doctrine has so far "worked" in Eastern Europe and possibly may "work" in Afghanistan.

It all depends on what kind of society the United States wants to be.

Commonweal, August 12, 1983

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the ecclesial community by a particular theologian as a result of her or his earlier free theological interpretations.

CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING analogy: a particular political philosopher (say John Rawls or Robert Nozick) develops a concept of "justice." This philosopher then makes this proposal (with its arguments) to the community of inquirers competent to judge it (political philosophers). The same political philosopher may also believe that this proposal has important implications for the society in which he or she attempts to be a responsible citizen. As a responsible citizen, the political philosopher now proposes the same theory to, say, American society. The political philosopher now has the additional task of interpreting how the proposal on justice does or does not accord with the self-understanding of American society and its particular authorities (the Constitution, the courts, legislatures and legislation, etc.).The philosopher may claim that this theory of justice is a genuine development or refinement of traditional American notions. The philosopher may claim that the theory is a necessary corrective of a major or minor flaw in the practice or self-understanding of the tradition which should be acceptable on the basis of the principles of the tradition.

The philosopher may even decide that, in this case, her duty as a responsible citizen demands an exercise of "civil disobedience" to a given law in order for the society to realize its own ideals of justice. In short, the problems of "responsible citizenship" for the theologian in the church are as real, as difficult, and as soluble as the analogous problems of a political philosopher in American society. Some theologians may even be called upon to play the role of a loyal opposition — which is still, I trust, a responsible role for any "citizen" of any community.

On this reading, therefore, there are different levels and degrees of "consensus." There can exist a liberal consensus on methods of interpretation of scripture side by side with far less theological consensus on how to use the results of these methods in Catholic theology. One might even find a more tentative consensus on how all Catholic theology functions with some "method of correlation." Even if that were available, one would still not necessarily have a consensus on how the results of that theological method should function in the wider church. Some day we might even possess a theological consensus on how theological proposals for either development or correction should function in the whole church and still not have a consensus on any particular proposal. In sum, there are levels of ever more tentative consensus. Not to distinguish these levels and the kinds of methods and arguments appropriate to each is to ask the "liberal consensus" on scriptural interpretation to carry far more weight in theology as a whole than it possibly can. And simply to list "conclusions" from scriptural exegesis and ignore how those conclusions are, in fact, related to theological proposals for the Catholic community by individual theologians (and not only by Cardinal Baum) does not help much. Indeed, such a procedure risks rhetorically the endorsement of a new form of "conclusion theology" which we could well do without. The famous

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"Denziger-theology" of the old teaching manuals didn't work. Its reverse side — an anti-Denziger theology of new "shocking" conclusions — won't work any better. It is, to repeat, all more complicated than that.

Catholicism is too rich and pluralistic a tradition to be reduced to such unlikely candidates for distinctiveness as refusal to accept historico-critical methods or a refusal to abandon a notion of rationality which involves a neo-Scholastic concept of proof which does not prove anything. There are better candidates for Catholic distinctiveness — some examples are a sense of trust in tradition, a sense of community, a sense of sacramentality, and a sense of a crucial role for "reason" in "faith." If you do not trust the members of the liberal consensus of our own day on all this, then consider liberals of earlier days — for example, Thomas Aquinas or John Henry Newman. If you demand "proofs," then return to Ludwig Ott — or get yourself on Phyllis Schlafly's mailing list. For myself, I would rather stay with all the real Catholics — like Geraldine Ferraro and Thomas Sheehan. Tom Sheehan, won't you please come home?

NEITHER FUNDAMENTALISM NOR AGNOSTICISM

The ways of knowing

ANDREW M. GREELEY

THOMAS SHEEHAN'S LONG REVIEW of Hans Küng's *Eternal Life?* in the *New York Review of Books* is in fact a description of what Sheehan calls the "liberal consensus" among Catholic theologians. It seems fair to summarize Sheehan's critique of this consensus in two propositions:

1. The critical analysis (scientific method) of the "liberal" theologians has left little that is distinctively Catholic: "One can ask what its teachings have to offer that cannot be found outside of the scope of its experience and discourse."

2. The liberal consensus has not been sufficiently hard-headed to see that there is no middle ground between fundamentalism and secular agnosticism. If they were honest with themselves, Küng and the other members of the consensus would be able to say "As far as one can know, when you're dead, you're dead — and the same holds for Jesus. Rather than hoping him out of the tomb, leave him there and try to live the kind of life that got him to his grave" a life, according to Professor Sheehan, of moral, social, and political concerns.

My principal effort in this commentary will be on the second proposition. I hope to show that social science theorizing today about the nature of knowing does not at all demand a choice between agnosticism (of the liberal political variety) and fundamentalism.

I shall leave to theologians the question of whether Professor Sheehan's summary of their consensus is adequate. As a consumer rather than a producer of theology, I will be content with the observation that the extremely limited nature of Professor Sheehan's thinking is indicated by the fact that he either does not know or does not report that the first question — about the distinctiveness of Catholic teachings — has been answered by what should be recognized as the Summa of the "liberal consensus," David Tracy's *The Analogical Imagination*. The Catholic tradition is much too multifaceted and polyvalent to be demolished by a handful of theologians, however skilled, precisely because, as Father Tracy demonstrates, its experience of the presence of God (radically different from that of the other three Yahwistic religions — Islam, Judaism, and Protestantism), its images and symbols of God, and its stories which recount the experience and explicate the symbols are unique.

I shall return to this point at the end of my commentary.

THE UNDERLYING assumption of Professor Sheehan's commentary seems to be that there is but one valid way of knowing, the scientific method (critical analysis). If one accepts this method, then the only alternative to fundamentalism is agnosticism. Stated thus baldly one wonders how Professor Sheehan can possibly propound it. Surely there are enough philosophers and theologians who have effectively refuted such a dichotomy — Ricoeur, Polanyi, Ramsey, Barbour, as well as Tracy, Lonergan, and Rahner within the Catholic tradition.

Moreover, his assumption is at odds with the thinking of many of the social scientists who are on the leading edge of the search for explanations of how we humans know. Cognitive psychologists, researchers in artificial intelligence, post-structuralist students of human development, and cultural anthropologists have developed converging approaches to the issues of knowing and language which are pertinent to the question of religious knowledge and religious language. Like all too many philosophers and theologians (particularly on Catholic faculties), Professor Sheehan's social science is a generation too old.

The consensus among scholars in the disciplines I have mentioned can be simplified as follows: we humans know by naming. We understand by imposing meaning on the conflict-

FATHER ANDREW M. GREELEY, *currently a professor of sociology at the University of Arizona, is Senior Study Director of the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago. His books include* The New Agenda, American Catholic: A Social Portrait, The Making of the Popes, *and several best-selling works of fiction.*

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ing phenomena of our existence. We use our powers of language to order and refine our experience through a process of "model fitting." We carry around in our brains explanatory "pictures" of the world (models, symbols). We test the validity of these pictures by using them to organize our experiences. We fit our models (much as a mathematical sociologist does in analyzing data) to our experience, perhaps refine them in the light of the experience, and then use them tentatively as an explanation and a template — explanation in that they name the experience and template in that they are pragmatic patterns for our further action.

Those Catholics who think Marx is the only philosopher of the last two centuries might call this "model fitting" praxis. Those who have read a bit further would call it pragmatism and imagine the glee of the shade of William James as the social science world (whose gleaming white marble building on the Harvard campus does, after all, bear his name) rediscovers his genius (often without due credit).

A model is provisionally valid to human intelligence (if not to philosophers) when it fits the data of experience well enough to help one to direct one's actions in the necessary encounter with further experience — empiricism and pragmatism with a vengeance. I must emphasize here that social science does not address itself to the epistemological worth of such "model fitting" or "story telling" knowledge. It merely says that such is the nature of human knowing as best we understand it today. (Presumably Michael Polanyi and Paul Ricoeur provide the epistemological foundation that we need.)

The most accessible and perhaps the most elegant of these neo-Jamesians is the cultural anthropologist Clifford Geertz. (He might not like the term, since he thinks of himself, I suspect, as a neo-Weberian.) In Geertz's perspective, we humans organize, respond to, and shape reality through sets of "culture systems," networks of symbols (models, pictures, stories) which are appropriate to different forms of our experience. Our knowledge consists of the endless fitting of these culture systems to empirical phenomena by shaping our behavior in accord with our network of pictures and modifying them when they don't fit too well. Among the culture systems are ideology, common sense, art, law, science, and religion.

The last two deserve further comment. Religion is that set of symbols which uniquely claims to explain the ultimate meaning of life. Science is that network of stories (images, pictures, models) which makes possible a critical, self-reflective, and self-conscious analysis of observable phenomena. However much it pretends to be different from and superior to other culture systems, it nonetheless de facto works in the same way as the other systems: it fits its own stories to experiential reality and sees whether they work with regard to the phenomena it studies (a point Polanyi made a quarter of a century ago).

Two points follow: critical analysis (science) is a model-fitting exercise that does not and cannot of its very nature organize those experiences which create perplexity about ultimate reality. Religion and science are different symbol testing games and use different language (stories) with different rules.

Moreover, even those who in the name of science reject religious stories as fundamentalistic, must necessarily make up their own religious stories in order to have models to fit reality. Thus Professor Sheehan, dismissing myths in a fashion which suggests he is not paying attention to anything written on the subject since Bultmann, must have his own story, his own myth, to find meaning for life: we should imitate the secular social and political concerns of Jesus — but not apparently listen to the stories Jesus told about his heavenly father, models for fitting in the search for an ultimate explanation of reality.

One must wonder why. Other than Professor Sheehan's own personal proclivities, why not choose an epicurean or a stoic model? Since ultimate reality, in his perspective, is unknowable, why opt for one posture towards life in preference to another. Of course, there is a story of ultimate reality implicit in Professor Sheehan's choice as there is in the choice of every agnostic. Everyone, in other words, has a religion, a model of ultimate reality which is fit to the data of experience.The agnostic's presumed advantage is that he doesn't have to make his model explicit and the rest of us must.

IT IS EMBARRASSING to have to repeat these materials about language games, different levels of model fitting, and the inevitability of an ultimate story (a religious model). Presumably most of those who are involved in the serious study of religion know them already. Yet apparently Professor Sheehan does not. Or if he does, then why does he leave such materials out of his article? Why does he play the same old game of science refuting religion?

The issue finally in any discussion of religion is not the historical accuracy of a given story, but whether that which the story offers as a model of ultimate reality is true? The question — again it is embarrassing to have to say it at this late date — is not the accuracy of a given account of the resurrection of Jesus in a gospel story, but whether the God whom Jesus preached — a God whose love is stronger than death — is in fact a useful model to fit the data of experience. Does a religious story which claims that love stronger than death is what the universe is about fit the data better than any other story?

This is an extremely important question — maybe the only important question. It cannot be answered by scientific theology nor can it be proved by rational argument, because religious models are not susceptible to that kind of treatment (or they wouldn't be religious, for by definition the ultimate cannot be rationally or scientifically considered). Neither fundamentalist literalism nor agnostic secularism is an appropriate criterion for religious model fitting. When both are used, as they are by Professor Sheehan, as alternatives, they violate the rules of the language/model fitting game.

Science cannot disprove the existence of Good in the cosmos and fundamentalism cannot prove scientifically the presence of Good in it either.

However the leap of faith, one way or another, is not irrational or superstitious or idiotic simply because it can neither be constrained nor refuted by critical analysis. It is

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rather a different kind of model fitting for a different set of issues.

It is beyond my purpose in this article to discuss the highly personal nature of criteria for judging the fit of an ultimate model. John F. Haught's book *The Cosmic Adventure* (Paulist Press, $6.95, 192 pp.) is extremely useful in this respect. I merely wish to assert that the emerging consensus among those social scientists who study religious ways of knowing is that such knowledge is inevitable and must necessarily take place in a context of model fitting which is different from that of scientific analysis. If one says that, by definition, only that religion is acceptable which can be fitted to reality according to the rules of science, then one on a priori grounds excludes the possibility of religion — and must take the agnostic's step of sneaking in the back door (much as the Blessed Mother is alleged to sneak sinners into heaven), an implicit religious story which is no more scientifically provable than the story which one has just rejected.

I do not want to suggest, for example, that the question of the Virgin Birth is trivial. But it is not as important as the question of whether God loves us with the life-giving, nourishing, healing tenderness of a mother loving her new-born child. Is this a model of the meaning of life which fits the data? Nothing in the Catholic "liberal consensus" demands that this question be answered in the negative — that this story be rejected as an explanation and template for life.

As my sister Mary Durkin and I will suggest in a forthcoming work from Viking Press (heavily indebted to the thinking of David Tracy and John Shea), the Catholic experience is sacramental, of a present God rather than a radically absent one; the Catholic imagination is analogical, picturing God more as like the experiences and persons of our life than unlike. And the Catholic story is comic — it believes in happy endings.

Such experience, image, and story (constituting together a religious model) might be appropriately tested by the criteria of religious model fitting. It cannot be proved by fundamentalistic interpretation of texts or disproved by scholarly analyses of texts. But it does not follow that the religious knowledge which results from testing such a model is inferior to scientific knowledge, much less "vague," to use Professor Sheehan's word. It is merely different and it has to be different because it deals with different phenomena, ultimate ones.

Implicit in his analysis is the glorification of scientific knowledge as the only safe and certain kind of knowledge. It is a position which many still hold and to which he is certainly entitled. However it is not the only position, neither in theology nor more recently in social science. Nor are alternative positions necessarily any less intelligent or less hard-headed or less realistic than his.

THE SHEEHAN ARTICLE is, in fine, a lightweight piece. It may well confirm the fear of many poorly educated and badly read priests and nuns and would-be Catholic intellectuals that religion is finished and all that remains is social action — left-wing and marxist social action at that. It does so, however, at the price of horrendously oversimplifying the issues and inaccurately stating the alternatives.

Paul Ricoeur (whom Sheehan fails to mention) speaks of the two naivetés, the first of the simple believer and the second of the sophisticated believer who has unpacked the stories (critically examined the models) and then recommitted himself or herself to the ultimate truth contained in the stories.

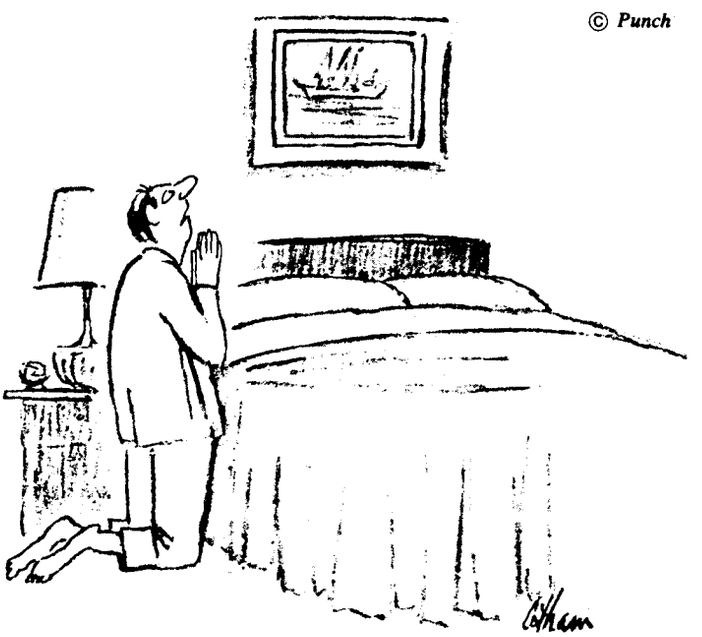
Between these two naivetés there is the period of critical analysis in which the stories are examined with all the tools available from modern scholarly methods. Such analysis is essential for mature belief. But to be fixated at that level is to refuse to test the model of the second naiveté, to turn away from the possibility of mature faith, to refuse to see if the truth contained in the stories about the nature of the ultimate and the ultimate of nature might indeed stand up to the criteria of religious model fitting.

After reading Father Raymond Brown's book on the Infancy Narratives and the anthropological literature on mother goddesses, am I willing and even eager to accept Mary as a model of God's maternal love?

You better believe I am. God damn well better love me with the tender passion of a mother or She is going to be in a lot of trouble.

Professor Sheehan apparently has opted to remain between the two naivetés. He is free to do so, but to insist that such is the only possibility is absurd, especially because even the most critical scientific agnostic must also find a culture system, an ultimate meaning, an explanatory model, a final story for life. If it's a better one than God's maternal love, more power to him.

Everyone fashions a model of faith. Some do it openly. Others pretend not to, but still do it in secret. They are no less naive than the rest of us, only less honest.



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"Is there some way you could help me, but make it look like I did it all myself?"

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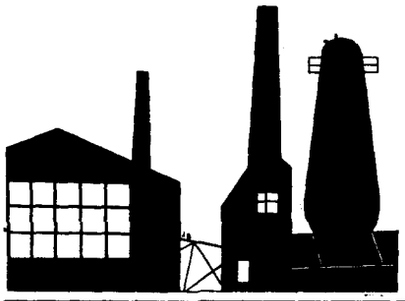
EQUITARIANISM: AN ESOP'S FABLE



Next step: worker ownership?

COREY ROSEN

"The great failure of capitalism is that not all share in its beneficence, and the great failure of socialism is that all share in its misery."

Winston Churchill

SINCE THE nineteenth century, the prevailing assumption has been that there are two ways "the means of production" can be owned: by the state or by a limited number of individual and institutional capitalists. Either way, most people would be employees, not owners, of capital. Under this assumption, the empirical truth of Churchill's aphorism has been all too apparent. Socialist economies have, for the most part, simply been unable to match the economic growth and dynamism of capitalist ones; yet capitalism, especially in its more unfettered instances, has tended to create a distribution of rewards most people find inequitable. So socialist countries dabble in free enterprise, while capitalist countries establish programs to redistribute wealth (social security, medicare, progressive taxation, etc.). In our own country, we seem to be on an endless policy seesaw, sometimes favoring economic growth by encouraging the already wealthy to invest; sometimes urging equity by finding a way to redistribute that growth.

This growth/equity tension has become integral to our labor-management system, with managers insisting on the need to restrain equity (better wages, working conditions, etc.) in order to maintain and expand market shares, while workers insist on getting as much as they can. Calls from both sides for "cooperation" only seem effective when entire enterprises are threatened; otherwise, each sees the other's goals as inimical.

The system worked reasonably well for much of our first two centuries. It no longer seems to. By constantly attempting to redress capitalism's inequities, government has reached a point where almost all of us feel "entitled" to one government program or another. With almost everyone defined as a deserving beneficiary — and few as "worthy benefactors" (taxpayers who pay more than they get) — it is no wonder that we are unable to control our deficits. At the same time, our labor/management system has become less flexible, less competitive in worldwide markets. Management grasps for short-run profits in response to the demands of its shareholders (who, after all, have no reason to look towards a firm's long-term growth when they can buy some other stock with better short-run prospects). Labor seeks short-run gains, fearing that if it makes concessions, management will not give them back, and that the concessions won't help anyway. Neither side trusts the other enough to believe that anything it does for its adversary will be anything other than a permanent loss. As a result, according to a recent New York Stock Exchange report (*People and Productivity*, 1982), our use of human resources is falling far short of what it should be, making it increasingly difficult for American firms to compete worldwide.

In the last decade, however, more and more people have been experimenting with a way out, a way that combines social justice with free enterprise; a way that increases economic efficiency — not at the cost of equity, but as a result of it. It is an approach that is responsive to other changes in society and the workplace, and it is making workers the owners of their companies. I'll call it "equitarianism."

If the essence of "capitalism" is the individual ownership of capital, and the essence of "socialism" is its "social" ownership, then the essence of "equitarianism" is the equitable (not necessarily equal, but equitable) ownership of wealth. The term may be new, but the idea is not. It has been tried in various ways, in various places, for centuries; it has been expounded with great insight by Louis Kelso, San Francisco attorney and investment banker who popularized the idea's most effective incarnation, and who created some of its practical adaptations; and, most importantly, in the last decade it has been tried in the United States with great success and promise. Whether it will represent a significant part of our future remains to be seen, but it is clear that it represents one possible, logical response to current dilemmas.

During the last ten years, over six thousand U.S. companies have set up plans to share ownership with their employees. Employees own anywhere from 1 percent to 100 percent of these firms (the average is about 15-40 percent, with 10-15 percent of the firms having a majority of their stock owned by employees). The companies include everything from small restaurants to industry giants. Among others, employees own or soon will own 10-35 percent of about half the major airlines

COREY ROSEN *is the executive director of the National Center for Employee Ownership, a non-profit, private research organization located in Arlington, Virginia.*

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(Pan Am, Eastern, Western, Republic, PSA, America West, Southwest, People Express, and Continental) and 43-51 percent of four major trucking firms (Branch Industries, Commercial Lovelace, Interstate Motor Freight, and Transcon). They own 100 percent of the tenth largest steel firm (Weirton Steel), most of one of the largest engineering firms (Raymond International), 70 percent of a Fortune 500 textile firm (Dan River), and 43 percent of the largest sugar producer (U.S. Sugar). Employee-owned firms such as Comsonics and Virginia Textiles were listed by *Inc.* magazine as among America's fastest growing companies, while *Industry Week* honored W.L. Gore Associates, a two-thousand employee, 95 percent employee-owned, high-technology manufacturer, as the company with the best management of people in 1983. Employees also own 100 percent of Pamida, one of the Great Plains' largest retailers, all of *U.S. News and World Report*, and 90 percent of the Journal Company, owner of the *Milwaukee Journal*, the *Milwaukee Sentinel*, and several other firms. The list goes on. Most of this has happened within the last few years.

Employee ownership has received impressive support from society and government as well. As far back as 1975, a Peter Hart poll found that by a 66-25 percent margin, Americans would prefer to work for an employee-owned company. Ronald Reagan, the New York Stock Exchange, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the House Democrats, Ted Kennedy, Russell Long, and the Pope have endorsed it. About half the population is now covered by state laws encouraging employee ownership, and thirteen federal laws have been passed for the same purpose. To conservatives, having employees become owners is the ultimate in capitalism; to liberals, it is a new and practical way to achieve a better distribution of wealth.

THE FIRST MAJOR shot of this revolution was fired in 1974. Senator Russell Long convinced Congress to enact legislation providing tax incentives for companies that share ownership with employees through something called an "ESOP" (employee stock ownership plan). Under an ESOP, a company sets up a trust and makes tax-deductible contributions to it of stock or cash to buy stock. The stock is allocated to tax deferred accounts of individual employees, with (in most cases) all full-time employees having worked a year or more receiving allocations. Employees acquire a gradually increasing right to their shares (a process called "vesting"), generally qualifying for 100 percent after ten years. When they leave the company, or retire, they receive their stock, and usually sell it back to the company.

Companies use ESOPs for several reasons:

- As an employee benefit plan. Many companies want to provide employees with something more than wages and health insurance. Since companies can simply print new shares of stock (diluting the ownership of existing owners), and then deduct their value from their taxable income, an employee ownership plan provides an inexpensive means for providing an extra benefit;
- As a means to create a market for an owner's shares. In many independent companies, retiring owners find there is no ready market for their stock, or for the company itself, even if it is a successful firm. Business ownership is simply too risky an investment. Aside from this, many owners prefer to sell to their employees, and maintain their firm's identity, than to sell out to someone else. With an ESOP, an owner can have the company make tax-deductible cash contributions to the trust, which then buys the owner's shares. The owner then pays only low capital gains tax on the sale (other sales of stock back to the company normally require the payment of ordinary income tax, which is 2.5 times as high as capital gains tax);
- As a means to borrow money. Among employee benefit plans, only an ESOP can borrow money. The effect of this is that a company can have the trust borrow funds, which the trust then uses to buy newly issued or existing shares of company stock. The company now has the money (or the sellers of the stock do), and the trust has stock. The company makes tax-deductible contributions to the trust sufficient to enable it to repay its loan. In effect, this means the company is deducting *both* principal and interest, not just interest, from its taxable income. Moreover, the same dollars that are used to repay the loan are creating an employee benefit plan; and
- To save a failing firm. The most celebrated use of employee ownership is to buy companies that would otherwise close (such as Weirton Steel) or to provide employees with a share of the company in return for wage concessions (as at Eastern Airlines). Although some of the largest employee ownership plans have been created this way, this approach only accounts for 2 percent of all plans, the large majority of which are set up in very successful firms. Research at Cornell University and the National Center for Employee Ownership, however, shows that employee buyouts of failing firms have had a dramatic impact. Of the approximately sixty-five companies that can be classified as buyouts, only five have subsequently failed (although two others are in Chapter 11 reorganization). Over fifty thousand jobs have been saved in the process.

ESOPs are by far the most common means to share ownership, but other approaches, such as worker cooperatives, are growing as well. While the tax and financial benefits of employee ownership are significant, an equally important reason for the idea's growth is the belief that ownership improves company performance. Recent studies support this notion. A University of Michigan Survey Research Center study, for instance, found that employee ownership companies were 1.5 times as profitable as conventional firms, while a study reported in the *Journal of Corporation Law* found these firms had twice the average annual productivity growth rate of conventional companies. Finally, a National Center for Employee Ownership study found that companies with a majority of their stock owned by employees created three times more net new jobs per year than comparable conventional firms. These studies are still preliminary, but they are suggestive.

There are drawbacks, of course. Not every firm realizes the performance gains suggested above. In an ongoing research

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project designed to determine what makes employee ownership work or fail, two factors seem especially important in assuring success: contributing substantial amounts of stock on a regular basis, and really believing that employees deserve to be owners. Many companies set up employee ownership plans primarily for their own tax or financial advantages. They would prefer to get these benefits without sharing ownership. Many other firms contribute relatively small amounts of stock (38 percent contribute less than 10 percent of annual compensation). In both cases, employees are unlikely to begin thinking of the company as "theirs." Moreover, employee ownership is not the same thing as employee control. Only about 30 percent of the plans allow employees to vote the stock allocated to them (in the rest, a trustee votes it at the direction of management), although 60 percent of the majority employee-owned firms do, as do virtually all of the larger companies. While the effect on productivity of ownership without control is still not clear, the ability of employee ownership to transform the labor/management system is limited by this separation of ownership and voting rights.

There are financial drawbacks as well. If a company issues new shares to a plan, current shareholders suffer a dilution, although, in theory, the greater employee motivation and the financial benefits of the plan will more than offset this. Privately held companies must, by law, repurchase the shares of departing employees (otherwise, there would be no market for them), a liability that can be substantial for some firms. Employee ownership plans are also expensive to install and administer. Still, for many companies, employee ownership is a very attractive financial option.

There are important financial benefits for employees. A typical plan provides employees with 10-15 percent of annual pay in stock. For an employee who stays with a company for twenty years and earns an average of $20,000 per year, that can mean $100,000 or more if the company's stock value grows at 10 percent per year. Moreover, employee ownership companies are more likely to provide their workers with a significant role in their company. Although it is true that only a minority of firms are actually controlled by their workers, and most firms do not even allow workers to vote their shares, it is also true that the chances of an employee's being able to have a say in company affairs is infinitely greater in employee ownership companies than conventional companies, where such opportunities almost never exist. Moreover, research shows that the percentage of employee ownership companies allowing this kind of employee input is growing. Newer plans are more democratic, and some older plans, having become accustomed to employees being owners, are now taking the next step of providing them with more of a say in the company. Employee ownership companies are more likely to have "quality of worklife" or other kinds of shopfloor participation programs. On a day-to-day basis, these opportunities may be even more important to workers than being able to vote their stock.

For many companies and their workers, therefore, sharing ownership is a "win-win" situation. Company performance can be enhanced, tax benefits are created, employees receive important financial rewards, and work is made more participative. Given all this, why hasn't employee ownership grown even faster?

First, as noted, there are legal costs and other financial drawbacks. Second, companies with high employee turnover, or whose managers just cannot see sharing ownership with employees, are poor candidates for a program based on retaining employees and giving them more of a role in the company. Third, the concept is still new and unknown to many people. Fourth, any very different new idea faces enormous inertial forces — "this just isn't the way we do things here." Finally, unions have been ambivalent towards the concept, much as they were toward pension plans in the twenties. Many unions are more comfortable with their accustomed adversarial posture. They do not trust management enough to believe that such ownership is not simply another way to coopt workers.

Still, the prospects for employee ownership are encouraging. Its growth in just a decade has been impressive, and its success provocative. It has received considerable media attention, and has broad political support. More significantly, perhaps, it fits society's needs.

BY SHARING OWNERSHIP, society clearly becomes more equitable. That has been an avowed policy of most of our national parties for decades. As Ronald Reagan put it in a 1980 letter to a New Orleans newspaper, "could there be anything resembling free enterprise if wealth and property were concentrated in the hands of a few? . . . Concentrated power is the enemy of liberty and the rights of man . . . and in any society social and political power flow from economic wealth." Reagan went on to urge the wider use of employee ownership as a solution. The unique appeal of employee ownership as an approach to the equity problem is that it contributes to economic growth, rather than sacrificing it, as other approaches have.

Employee ownership also makes sense for labor relations. A more competitive world economy seems to favor companies that are more adaptive and flexible, where management and labor work with, not against one another. American firms have exhorted their workers to be more cooperative, but workers often see this as little more than rhetoric designed to secure wage concessions. Sharing ownership provides a very direct and positive means to give workers a reason to cooperate. It offers an equality of gain, not just an equality of sacrifice.

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Ownership is consonant with changes in workers themselves. According to a recent survey by the Public Agenda Foundation, today's more educated workers demand much more from a job than a good paycheck. They want an opportunity to participate in the design and implementation of their work. According to a New York Stock Exchange report, if given these opportunities, productivity in the U.S. would soar. Employee ownership is a fertile area for such participation programs. It provides the economic rewards and the sense of integration into the company that makes participation more practical, and it can provide a greater sense of meaning to the work itself. It is, after all, much more interesting to mow your own lawn than your neighbor's.

Finally, coming changes in the technology of work may make employee ownership especially appealing. Some observers believe that the total amount of work needed to be done in the future may actually decline. While this is very controversial, there seems little doubt that much of the traditional work in industry will disappear. At the very least, the replacement of people by machines will cause considerable disruption, if not actual higher levels of unemployment. Under our current ownership system, the new capital that will do this displacing will be owned by a relatively few people. Indeed, "supply-side economics" is based on the idea that we should provide extra incentives to the already wealthy to invest in new capital. The result cannot help but be an even less equitable distribution of wealth, coupled with considerable trauma for many workers.

An alternative would be for this new wealth to be owned increasingly by the workers themselves. ESOPs, for instance, could be used to purchase new machinery (using the borrowing feature discussed earlier). When faced with a need to reduce total labor in a company, it might be possible for employees with ownership income to agree to work fewer hours or seek earlier retirement without suffering a loss of income. Moreover, the newly created wealth would be more equitably distributed, creating less of a demand on government to do the redistribution.

Employee ownership has grown very rapidly, and the many arguments for its use suggest the growth will continue. Whether it will ever replace our current ownership system is impossible to say, but it is worth noting that in just a decade, approximately 5 percent of the work force has become covered by an employee ownership plan. Given the growth rate of the idea, it is not unreasonable to predict that by the turn of the century as many people will participate in employee ownership as now participate in unions, the other major force for worker equity in society.

For all its economic and social benefits, employee ownership's ultimate importance may be even deeper. Broadened ownership was the cornerstone of the very creation of this country, and was held by the founding fathers as essential to our system. Our early economic policies were explicitly designed to create as many capital (land then) owners as possible. Some, such as Albert Gallatin, argued "the democratic principle upon which this nation was founded should not be restricted to the political process but should be applied to the industrial operations as well."

Today there is a basic inconsistency with this belief. The corporation has become a dominant institution in the American system, one that is not democratically organized. This inconsistency has been justified on the notion that democracy is inefficient. Research on employee ownership, however, suggests this assumption is incorrect. Democratically organized firms create more new jobs than comparable conventional ones, and managers of these companies are unanimous in reporting that their approach contributes to company performance. Studies of employee ownership on both productivity and profitability (referred to earlier) find that providing workers with full voting rights has no negative effect on company performance, and may have a slightly positive effect.

Moreover, workers would be better shareholders than the large institutions and wealthy individuals who now own most corporate stock. These investors are, rationally, interested

Nancy G. Westerfield

The Hour of Immortality

If any, it is now's hour
Of early evening in winter, your coming
Home toward Venus enlarging in the West,
A raw bulb hung on a celestial string,
The gaunt dark shambling upward in the privet
Like an old cat finding his way
Back to the house, and the house
One you have always returned to
For its dream-filled picture windows:
Lights coming up, a lamp canted
Over a reading desk, a drapery
Drawn aside, a blind raised; the dead
Are raised, the blind see, a gate
Opening swiftly inward brings the rest
Of them, all you ever left,
And you are changing their deaths
From the blunder backward through the awkward
Door to gracefulness: this chosen occasion,
Gestures of welcome, the well-known voices
Refreshed after long silence, telling you many
Happy returns of the day, holding out presents.
Not scarred after all by the continual
Corrosions of your grieving, they fill the whole
Dimensions you have kept for them, this hour
Neither withhold their touch as in their lifetimes
Nor guard their speech, but giving you
The words that were what you came for,
Before going back into their pictures
Where their hands press as against windows,
Wanting you to share their inner radiance
From some summer past, across this winter
Darkness, across the night of snow
Just beginning to touch the grass.

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primarily in short-run gains. If a company is not doing well in the short-run, there is little incentive to try to change things. It makes more sense to sell and invest elsewhere. Workers, on the other hand, are more concerned with the future of their jobs than their stock dividends, and would, logically, be more disposed towards making long-term investments at the cost of short-term profits. That, of course, is exactly what most people say American companies need to do.

Broad ownership of wealth is good for the economy, the society, and the polity. Unfortunately, as industry supplanted agriculture as our primary economic activity we lost that notion. Today, employee ownership may just help bring us back to our roots.

Screen

DOWN & OUT IN MEXICO

'UNDER THE VOLCANO'

WITH PERVERSE perfection John Huston has made a film of Malcolm Lowry's *Under the Volcano* that seems guaranteed to please no one. Lowry fans will inevitably be disappointed by the missing pieces, while to moviegoers unfamiliar with the novel or its cult reputation, the picture is likely to appear fragmentary or perhaps even incoherent, an oblique story of a tiresome drunk.

Like *Remembrance of Things Past,* Lowry's monumental book has long been a Mount Everest that filmmakers have wanted to scale. And yet like *Remembrance*, like *Ulysses,* for that matter like *Moby Dick* and *Wise Blood* which Huston tried and failed to wrestle into film shape, *Under the Volcano* is exactly the kind of novel which will resist translation: what it has to say is inseparable from its literary form. The book isn't about what characters do or say, but about how they think and what they see. As it weaves among the perceptions of four characters during what turns out to be the last day in the lives of two of them — the alcoholic British consul Geoffrey Firmin and his divorced wife Yvonne — current images trigger a network of memories; action is so constricted that a walk from house to garden is a major event; and time itself seems lost in thought. Occasionally Lowry's daydreamers come up for air, talking past each other in a way that only enforces their solitude.

Hovering over these infested private worlds is the doomed author himself, passionately recreating his own alienation. *Under the Volcano* is Lowry's one sustained achievement, a testimony rescued from the ruins of his alcoholism, and it is written as if the novelist's life is indeed on the line. To remove the author as the conductor of his own inner epic, as any film must, and to separate the characters from their inner monologues, is to strip the work of its validity.

Huston and his scenarist, Guy Gallo, have turned the novel upside down. Where Lowry celebrates subjectivity, Huston is his usual detached self. Where Lowry's language heaves and swells, Huston's approach is lean to a fault. And where Lowry calls attention to his ingenuity, Huston is stubbornly self-effacing. To Lowry's modernist bravura Huston opposes his seamless Hollywood classicism.

Avoiding any attempts to duplicate the novel's self-enclosed reveries — there are no voice-overs or narration, and only a few brief point-of-view shots — Huston remains outside the characters. His neutral, eye-level camera stares at them as if they are laboratory specimens. Often photographed against walls or in cramped spaces, they seem trapped by the director's steady, pitiless, finally accusing gaze.

Lowry's voluptuous book is dense with symbols and mythic overtones while Huston is an imperturbable realist who blandly denudes such motifs of poetic resonance as the volcano, a reappearing white horse, and death masks. So chaste are his methods that he even denies himself atmospheric embellishments. He downplays details of weather and landscape: the Mexican humidity that seeps through walls and clothes and that influences the characters' moods, and the lush scenery, are curiously deadpan.

Scrutinized by the relentless close-ups, the actors have to carry the show, and Albert Finney as the soused, terminally embittered consul is indeed prodigious. Finney may well be the most modest of the great British character actors; it's hard to see him at all beneath the masks he builds for his characters. He's so meticulous in revealing the way an alcoholic moves and speaks — erratic rhythms, blurred gaze, lumbering gait, sudden leaps of bile, bemused private monologues, the character communing with his own inner voice — that people have asked Huston if his actor was actually drunk. Coating his dialogue with scathing irony, Finney doesn't allow Firmin a single sentimental moment. His character, as Lowry intended, is bent on befouling himself and the woman who has been foolish enough to love him. Huston lets his actor take off in two scenes, a wry comic interlude with a stuffy British tourist where Finney strikes echoes of Ralph Richardson at his most deliciously droll, and a poisonous outburst where the consul lashes Yvonne. It's here that we see fleetingly the character's gnarled torment, the self-created hell in which he inevitably drowns.

As in the novel, though, the consul is a solo performance. Lowry hasn't written other characters for his alter ego to play against, and Huston hasn't helped by casting Finney opposite Jacqueline Bisset and Anthony Andrews (as the consul's half-brother Hugh who has had an affair with Yvonne). Coiffed and dressed like a high fashion model Bisset is inappropriately elegant, and she has no assurance as an actress, no emotional resources: she's exquisite and totally inexpressive. Because Anthony Andrews is equally hazy and mute, important contrasts — Hugh's political idealism and Yvonne's romantic longings pitted against Geoffrey's voracious cynicism — evaporate. When the three actors are on screen together, there's no tension. The space between them doesn't crackle with the weight of their entangled pasts and of the

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unspoken, and as a result Finney too begins to seem remote, a miniature observed under glass rather than the tragic underachiever of Lowry's mythic vision.

When it was screened at the Cannes Film Festival last spring, journalists seemed eager to label *Under the Volcano* the swan song of a Hollywood master. But there isn't anything valedictory about it, nor is it the work of an old man holding on to his power, however precariously, as if for the last time. It may be wrongheaded, but this version of *Under the Volcano* is exactly the film that Huston wanted to make. This is his idea of the novel, a romantic triangle that demonstrates (as the ads proclaim) that "one cannot live without love." Bloodless, without poetry or intellect or emotional power, *Under the Volcano* is nonetheless a work of unfaltering control, of professional discipline, signed unmistakably by the same terse, hard director who made *Treasure of the Sierra Madre* thirty-six years ago.

FOSTER HIRSCH

(Foster Hirsch, one of the guest critics reviewing movies for Commonweal, *is the author of* Film Noir: The Dark Side of the Screen *and the forthcoming* A Method to Their Madness: The History of the Actors Studio [*Norton*].*)*

Dance

THE GOLDEN SLIPPER

FROM ASHES TO ASSETS

WHATEVER ELSE it may be, American Ballet Theatre's production of "Cinderella" is no stepchild. During the company's recently completed national tour, it has been given extravagant costuming and elaborate settings, ABT's largest number of alternating principal casts, and extensive advertising exposure. The result has been the sort of box-office success ABT badly needed but could scarcely have anticipated.

The cost of the production is placed at $925,000. Between its opening at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. on December 20, 1983 and its first presentation in New York on April 24, 1984 at the Metropolitan Opera House, the investment was paid back many times over. Faced with a mammoth deficit from the poorly attended Spring 1983 season, ABT responded vigorously. The Board of Directors underwent a number of changes. Melville Straus replaced Donald M.Kendall as chairman, and Herman Krawitz resigned as Executive Director. The latter's post was abolished, its operations devolving on Charles Dillingham who remained as General Manager. Artistically, Mikhail Baryshnikov's position in the company was enhanced, although his formal ties to ABT seemed to have weakened. It was he who fought for "Cinderella" and co-choreographed it with Peter Anastos.

Baryshnikov has agreed to remain as Artistic Director for an indefinite period without a contract. At the conclusion of the Spring '84 season, he requested that he not be paid for administrative duties. Presumably performance fees, choreographic royalties and the like will continue as previously. During the financial crisis that occurred after the disastrous Spring '83 season, no one seemed to have noticed that Baryshnikov's contract had expired. Nor did he bring it up. At present the most he will say is that he may appoint someone to share his duties since he has the option of pursuing private projects which may include performing with other companies.

What of the production itself? Once postponed because of a 1982 dancers' strike, it has become a knight in shining armor sturdily protecting the fiscal integrity of the company. It is, first of all, not a traditional telling of the tale with emphasis on Cinderella's innate nobility of character shining through the tatters. This production maintains a certain emotional distance. At times, it seems to be a comment upon the preposterousness of the fairy tale itself rather than a whole-hearted exposition of it. The point is made quite explicitly in the finale when all the characters join in a grand promenade as if to say they have played their parts but it's just a story, that nothing should be taken too seriously.

Between the opening in Washington and its first appearance in New York the production was cut by about twenty minutes. The shorter running time is better. A scene with cobblers from

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all over the prince's kingdom is not missed. The cat, who is Cinderella's only friend and confidant, seems to be more dominant, alternating between kittenish behavior and semi-human posturing. Just after comforting Cinderella who has been berated by her domineering sisters, the cat suddenly pounces playfully at the bristles of her broom. He is not a standard character in the story, but was introduced by Michael Fokine in a 1938 London production. The cat seems to fit right into the scene of this production which takes advantage of every opportunity for humor.

The first entrance of the Prince to the ball finds all of his subjects facing the wrong way. Only a tap on the shoulder by one of his soldiers makes them aware of his presence. The two sisters, played *en travestie* by men, are reliable knockabout clowns exploited to the fullest, both at home and at the ball. The four soldiers in the Prince's retinue tend to a Keystone Cops' foolishness whenever possible. Three young women all but turn themselves inside out trying to fit into the slipper when the Prince visits their home. Again and again the slipper proves irresistibly humorous as first the stepmother and then the sisters try to stuff grossly unsuitable feet into its tiny confines.

The choreography at this character level is well shaped, beautifully timed, and imaginative. Dances devised for the principals are consistently less interesting and inventive. They almost cry out for the sort of movement ornamentation that is the accepted practice in the Soviet Union where a text is seen as an opportunity for exercising individual display. Powerfully developed star presences in the Soviet Union quite often make ordinary material seem made of finer stuff than is actually the case. So far this has not been so with "Cinderella." I have seen three casts of principals: Megali Messac and Patrick Bissel, Marianna Tcherkassky and Danilo Rdojevic, and Cheryl Yeager and Ross Stretton. All followed the choreography so dutifully, as is the custom in the West, they found themselves pallid in comparison to the cat, stepsisters, and assorted hangers-on.

Despite this lack of brilliance at the center, the ballet has been a success. Before starting work on the piece Baryshnikov made it clear that he was not going to appear in it. If it were going to be a success, it would be a company, not a personal performing success. He has been proven right, but at a price. Despite the glitter of the décor, the sumptuousness— sometimes oversumptuousness — of the costumes, and the wit, there is an emotional lack in the ballet.

Perhaps Baryshnikov and Anastos are correct in their analysis of the Prokofiev score. They have found it ambiguous in intent. The reaction of the public has been anything but ambiguous. In each of the cities in which benefit performances of "Cinderella" were given, box office response was gratifyingly substantial, as well as for all other performances. Struggling free of a major burden of debt by assuming the costs of the most expensive production it has ever mounted, ABT has made a courageous act of faith. Failure might have threatened the company's entire existence. Instead, the pure-hearted scullion has saved the day.

DON McDONAGH

Books: AGAINST THE SECULAR PROJECT

THE NAKED PUBLIC SQUARE
RELIGION AND DEMOCRACY IN AMERICA
Richard John Neuhaus
Eerdmans, $16.95, 280 pp.

William M. Sullivan

THE SUDDEN APPEARANCE of a potent religious new right on the American political scene just prior to the 1980 election, and its continuing importance, provides Richard John Neuhaus with a highly topical starting point for an important argument. *The Naked Public Square* develops an interpretation of the recent political militancy of traditionalist Christianity which, while in disagreement with the thrust of that movement, is distinctly at odds with the disdainful anxiety familiar in much contemporary discussion of the fundamentalist resurgence. But Neuhaus has a larger story to tell which opens up the whole tangled matter of the relation between religion and American public life and the bearing of the relationship on a host of contemporary controversies.

For Neuhaus the uproar over the public role of religion sparked by Rev. Jerry Falwell and his compatriots finds its significance in a larger, longer-term process. This is the development of a practice and understanding of public life premised on the notion that the United States is or ought to be a wholly secular society. Neuhaus maintains that by denuding the public forum of religious meaning and references this secularist philosophy is destroying an irreplaceable inheritance, leaving only a bleak and naked square, a sandy arena of contending interests bereft of any ties of civic friendship.

Neuhaus's book is an extended argument against the notion that American democracy can survive in a purely secular society, a proposition which he regards as a poor though currently popular reading of our national identity and one with highly destructive potential. This context distinguishes *The Naked Public Square* from the already considerable literature on the political significance of traditional religious militancy, and Neuhaus's judgment of the value of the religious right develops out of the larger argument.

The positive significance of the religious new right is that "it is forcing to the forefront the question of 'religious America' — the ways in which the American experiment is appropriately conceived as a sacred enterprise." Neuhaus notes that the opposition to the new religious militancy is often not a substantive

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We are witnessing today a contention between religious groups — evangelical, fundamentalist, Catholic — to succeed mainline Protestantism as the culture-shaping force that provides moral legitimacy for democracy in America. The telling of our story employs the theory of "the circulation of elites" propounded by Italian social theorist Vilfredo Pareto (d. 1923). Central to the story is the claim that the public square will not and cannot remain naked. If it is not clothed with the "meanings" borne by religion, new "meanings" will be imposed by virtue of the ambitions of the modern state.

— Richard John Neuhaus
The Naked Public Square

claim against the new right's proposals, but the more sweeping objection that religion has no business in politics — or law, or education, etc. Neuhaus traces this posture to what he terms a secularist notion that there can and ought to be a public ethic which is "conscientiously divorced from religious belief." Yet for Neuhaus there can be no viable public ethic which is not "informed by religiously grounded values." Any other value claims would be immediately suspect and contentious, perceived as the ideological masks of private interests. Only values consonant with religious tradition can transcend the contention among particular interests. "The reason for this is that, in sociological fact, the values of the American people are deeply rooted in religion."

Thus the danger of the secularist project for a public ethic divorced from religion is that by ruling out of court the nation's one truly unifying basis for moral understanding, secularists hasten the decay of civic bonds and the civility upon which any vision of democratic life depends. The intention of the secularizers is to remove the baleful coercive force of religion, specifically Christianity of the sort represented by the Moral Majority. The effort is to bring us closer to that end-state of modern politics announced by Alasdair MacIntyre in a phrase Neuhaus quotes several times: "politics becomes civil war carried on by other means."

The core error in the secularist scheme is that by seeking to divorce religious meaning from politics and public life generally, secularists in fact separate public argument from public belief, thus making public consensus a matter of aggregated private preferences and canceling the essential activity of public debate and discussion. It is here that Neuhaus can state his case against the religious right: fundamentalism's strident assertion of belief without regard to canons of either public argumentation or, often, civility is an "indispensable collaborator" with the secularists in creating the naked public square.

But while Neuhaus takes issue with the religious new right on matters of substance, indeed of theology, he argues even more strongly, and at greater length, against the secularist tendencies at work within liberal religion, particularly the mainline Protestant denominations. Neuhaus sees liberal theology as having led these churches to collaborate with the secularizers, thus undermining their specifically Christian task of proclaiming and upholding claims to meaning which transcend those of any purely worldly cause or institution, particularly the state.

For Neuhaus the real competitor with religion for providing an encompassing sense of meaning in the modern world is the state. The retreat of Judaeo-Christian presence from public life and discourse will leave a vacuum, and a nation rent by the cries of conflicting interests in search of legitimacy and eager for a framework of order and direction. Neuhaus concludes his investigation by canvassing the various religious bodies for indicators of potentials for reconstituting the moral basis of a public philosophy which could replace the fading Protestant vision of the nation, summing up his investigation with admonition and gloomy prognosis. "Central to the story is the claim that the public square will not and cannot remain naked. If it is not clothed with the 'meanings' borne by religion, new 'meanings' will be imposed by virtue of the ambitions of the modern state."

The Naked Public Square is an important book, coming onto the scene at a moment when the problems of democracy, public life, and religion are receiving a great deal of searching scrutiny. Neuhaus's argument deserves to be taken seriously, although the book does not present a sustained argument so much as a series of interconnected analyses, some of great import, such as the linkage of fundamentalists with secularists and the liberal churches. Yet the book is also flawed by too many fringe issues. It is not always logically consistent, especially in the section discussing some form of Communism as a likely candidate for filling the empty square, and certainly the extreme closeness of fit between religion and public philosophy in American history can and will be challenged. But, overall, this is a book worth reading, and more, worth thinking about.

No ends to obsession

FOREIGN BODIES
Barbara Grizzuti Harrison
Doubleday, $16.95, 348 pp.

Gerard Reedy

Foreign Bodies, Barbara Grizzuti Harrison's fourth book and first novel, explores two major sequences in the life of Angela, its principal character and narrator. The first is her late adolescence and early adulthood. Here Angela begins to see the limitations of her mother and falls in love with David Larrimar, her forty-year-old English teacher, who takes her in hand and liberates her from the narrow background of her family. David is also a homosexual; he loves Angela yet cannot give her the active sexual life for which the novel as a whole indicates her predilection. When Angela marries another man, David commits suicide; as a result of his death, as a tribute to his "clarity," Angela decides to become a writer.

The second sequence of time

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explored, the major time frame of the book, takes Angela from about age thirty-eight to age forty-three. She has been divorced for eight years, is a successful writer, and lives in Brooklyn with her precocious daughter, Lucy, whose description resembles that of the author's own daughter in a 1980 collection of essays, *Off Center*. Angela's mother dies, and, at the book's end, her father is near death. An obsessional love dominates this time of her life, the main topic of the novel. The object of her love is Devi, a handsome painter from India, and, like David Larrimar, a homosexual. Angela also tells us about other sexual affairs she has during this time, in lieu of physical response from Devi.

A critic may someday write a study of novels of obsessional love; one of the constants would surely be the unworthiness as here, of the object of the obsession. For Devi is generally a nasty piece of work: self-indulgent, careless of Angela's feelings, and cruel. Barbara Grizzuti Harrison lets Angela reveal few moral qualities which make him lovable. May a reader psychoanalyze obsessed characters like Angela? What is the secret of her past that makes her fall in love with homosexual men who have, moreover, the consonants *d* and *v* in their first names? *Foreign Bodies* and the genre of obsessional literature do not answer such questions. In such fiction, the obsession, endlessly talked about, never explained, is all. We are to share Angela's pain, but not get annoyed that she does nothing about it. Dump him, we shout. I can't, I can't, she responds. The obsession is a given, corresponding in some coded way to an authorial presence, and chosen to disguise rather than to make clear — for audience and perhaps author herself.

Angela has philosophical and theological ambitions. Devi accuses her of talking and writing too much, of overarticulating lived experience; for him, her words dissect experience only to kill it. "Does everything have to mean something?" he asks her. Oddly enough, a desire to define and make clear is the last fault of which the reader wishes to accuse Angela. She piles up *mots* in waves of self-congratulation, even as she tells us she is in pain. She has great difficulty defining anything, and revels in giving opposite views between which she can't decide. The discrepancy between Devi's accusation and Angela's practice involves an irony of which one wishes a firmer affirmation by the author.

Foreign Bodies enunciates a curious theology of the flesh. Angela's confessor encourages her to speculate on her sexual journey rather than to end it, as she once wishes he would. As her name suggests, she has problems integrating flesh with spirit. Devi accentuates these, since his spiritual and moral attributes are minimal. Angela responds by trying to imbue his flesh with theological value. "Devi's beauty is like a character trait," she writes, "Devi's beauty amounts to a kind of goodness." She also speculates that his beauty is a kind of analogy, for her, of the Incarnation of the Word. Such opinions, which Angela recognizes as idolatrous, together with many other animadversions along this line, advance a theory of salvation in a flesh that lacks or is counter to spirit. I found this heterodox stuff interesting; however, even if one could seriously entertain the theory, Angela's emotional preoccupations prevent her from a discursive treatment sufficient to encourage a good argument.

Readers of the essays in *Off Center* will recognize Harrisonian motifs and attitudes here. A special blend of recollection, sympathy, and irony makes the essays very readable. While *Foreign Bodies* does not glut us with irony, Angela does have some witty remarks about the New York art world, on the fringes of which Devi lives. The feminist theme is played in several chords, from the high seriousness and beauty of Lucy's coming of age to sympathy for, and at times satire of, Eileen, Angela's friend, who goes through multiple transformations in a short period. Also, Angela's peculiar combination of freedom from convention and servitude to Devi may well involve sensitivity to a feminist motif that remains unavailable to the obtuse male reviewer.

Foreign Bodies puts forward a wealth of interesting material, but it is, I think, a deeply unfinished novel. Although much happens to Angela between the ages of thirty-eight and forty-three, she doesn't change. Any of us might contemplate the frightening possibility that in a given five-year period of our lives we can't perceive progression. Novels usually treat human experience more generously and give us a sense of order, of pattern if not of progress, of wisdom if not of joy. Barbara Grizzuti Harrison either cannot or will not order Angela's life. Angela leaves Devi at the very end of the novel, resolving not to repeat her experience. Earlier, however, she has told us of an experience "years later" in which she relives Devi in another, finally learning how she had "hurt" him. There is no end to the affair: Angela has not been able to forgive Devi or herself for it, and the author has been unwilling to invent a fictional form to give the experience a satisfactory beginning,middle, and end.

Purges & principles

THE ELECTRICAL WORKERS

Ronald W. Schatz

University of Illinois, $22.95, 279 pp.

Charles Owen Rice

TRAGEDY is not too strong a word for what happened to the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers — CIO, (UE), that big beautiful union of 600,000 members. It was shattered to bits because there was a fatal flaw in its leadership. Too many of those fine trade unionists were Communists — the real article — Stalinists. Their control was solid.

For a while, in the first flush of the New Deal and the wartime honeymoon with Russia, it did not matter. But with the coming of the Cold War and McCarthyism it mattered very much.

As he relates the rise and fall of the UE, Schatz gives an enlightening picture of the electrical industry and its giants, GE and Westinghouse. Their labor

(Continued on page 444)

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Ken Gaertner

Ink and Paint on Paper

Chi Pai-shih
Walk On A Windy Night

The Chinese gentleman
wearing a robe
shaped like a vase
has decided
to walk into deepening being.

The horizon's two grey lines
halt before they run him through.

Above him
the fragile branches
of the tree
lean into a solitude
the wind cannot scatter,
a bush entangles itself
with its brother.

The limbs of the tree
are reaching to catch infinity
if it should tumble from itself.

The Chinese gentleman
sees death
beyond the edge of the paper
but the edge does not banish
the pleasure of motion.

How victorious the ecstasy
of the meager blue!

John Nixon, Jr.

Heading for Titian

"Viewing these," he remarked in that stable of stiff
Saints, the medieval gallery, where even
Unwounded piety seemed no less painful
Than all-out martyrdom (multiple stabbings,
Decapitation), where haloes oppressed
Rather than illumined and where dogs
Had been so stunted by unwholesome events
They writhed like salamanders — "Viewing these,
One comprehends," he growled, heading for Titian,
"Why the Renaissance became imperative."

E. B. de Vito

Life-Sized Memory

I think of you, and more, and more,
time tints, retouches, and you are
a book unread, an unopened door,
a lane that, winding here and there,
I never troubled to explore.

"Speak", said Donatello
to his life-sized work, Zuccone.
"March," said Michelangelo
to Donatello's mailed St. George —

"Come," I say to my private view,
my life-sized memory of you,
no doubt as they,
no more than only half in play,
the other half somehow expectant —
enough so, to be unsurprised
if, miraculously,
it might turn out that way

Anne Porter

Thérèse

Thérèse, your statue's in our parish church,
But when you were a child you crossed these mountains
And drank the clear rock-shattered mountain water
And picked the daisies in the soaring meadows

And crept like us, over the black ravines.
"I can fall only into God," you said.

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policies, some of which were Machiavellian, are examined at justifiable length. Writing without academic jargon he has organized a mountain of research into a smooth narrative.

Schatz is fair, but, even as he tries to be neutral between the UE and its foes, he cannot suppress admiration for a great union and the dedicated, often fanatic, men and women who led it. His regret at its downfall is genuine and he grieves over the humbler victims of the purge of the 1950's.

That purge was inevitable. Those Communists, shrewd in so many matters, were naive to fancy that they could continue defiantly spouting the party line with impunity. Would that they had lain low and tried to ameliorate relations between Moscow and Washington. But their morale was high, they were good at what they did, and when they realized their ultimate vulnerability, it was too late.

In the end the UE was almost wiped out. The Auto Workers, the Machinists, and others raided it for years and kept on even after the CIO chartered its non-Communist IUE in 1949. The IUE eventually won about half the old membership. The employers, of course, took advantage of all this.

The Communists in the UE had many enemies but among the most formidable and long standing were the Socialists and the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists (ACTU). I was a free-wheeling part of the latter. Looking back I am not all that proud of my part.

Most of us ACTU people had been influenced by Dorothy Day in the direction of enthusiastic support of organized labor, but we lost Dorothy's serenity and positive attitude along the way. We were pro-labor and not merely anti-Communist, but I for one wish there had been far less emphasis on the negative.

Communism hadn't a chance of taking over America or even its labor movement, but we did not know that, and we were infected by the demon theory and the notion of Communist invincibility. When we began, our anti-Communism was not fashionable, especially in liberal circles, but it became so.

The Communist cadres in the UE were demanding, and in internecine strife they gave no quarter. They were merciless and injected nastiness and bitterness into the struggle; we as Christians, however, should have risen above that. My deepest regret is that we did not defend their civil rights in the final crunch, and let McCarthyites have their will of them.

It is ironic that the Communists who lost on the field of battle bid fair to win the battle of the books. Most of what is now being written takes their side, not only because times have changed, but because the left-wing survivors have a sense of history. The UE archives are open and in academic hands, (but so are mine). Copies of the *UE News* and the *Daily Worker* are available and eloquent.

Of all the many books, Schatz's is the most urbane and scholarly. Although it does not present the ACTU in a favorable light, it does not denounce it. Withal it is important, interesting, rather complete, and nearly always accurate.

Childhood's return

CHILDREN WITHOUT CHILDHOOD

Marie Winn

Pantheon, $13.95, 224 pp.

WHOLE CHILD/ WHOLE PARENT

Polly Berrien Berends

Harper & Row, $16.95, 360 pp.

IN DEFENSE OF THE FAMILY

Raising Children in America Today

Rita Kramer

Basic Books, $15.50, 263 pp.

Janet Scott Barlow

DURING the 1970s and beyond parents have been faced with an ongoing public and personal reassessment of the purpose of parenthood and the meaning of childhood. As the decade ran its course, it became increasingly obvious that this reassessment was defensive in nature, a reaction.

The focus of the seventies was on a highly valued but unclearly defined idea of self-fulfillment and self-realization. In a time when desires got mistaken for rights and responsibility got confused with repression, it was not surprising that self-fulfillment and self-realization were isolated as goals (or rights) unto themselves, rather than the natural (earned) consequence of a larger purpose.

Neither was it surprising that some parents, preoccupied with these false or impossible goals and unable to sort out priorities, should begin to view their children's needs as burdensome, one more obstacle to personal fulfillment. With encouragement from the women's movement and various pop psychologists, many parents (especially mothers) responded to this "burden" by redefining their children's needs, rather than reexamining the source and significance of their own desires. But children, being tough customers with their own felt priorities, confronted parents, as always, with the bare, inescapable truth: This wasn't working—for *anybody*.

The decade of the Self has, by consequence rather than intent, left two unavoidable questions. Do children, because they are *children*, have certain irreducible rights and needs? Do parents, because they *have* children, carry certain unalterable responsibilities? These are questions parents might ask themselves before approaching any of these three new books on family life—books which are, directly or indirectly, either a reflection of, or a response to, the decade of the Self.

Applying the above questions to Marie Winn's *Children Without Childhood* seems vital because the book is so bleak in its assumptions and so foggy in its purpose. It is never clear who exactly this book is for, or what exactly its intention is. It *appears* to be a book about the problems of children, but it pays more attention to the idea of children as problems. The book's main assumption, however, is obvious: Children today grow up early, unprotected from the influences of sex, drugs, pornography, and

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"sorrowful knowledge of the adult world." As for the causes and results of this appalling situation (whereby might come solutions), the author just isn't sure.

Marie Winn makes clear in her Introduction that she herself cannot decide whether parental attitudes reflect society's values or determine them, an indecision that proves telling. Since everything that people do can be either the cause or the result of everything that happens to them, the buck, in this case, stops nowhere.

Causes and results aside, Ms. Winn cites two factors which together form "the crucial determinant" in how today's children grow up: divorce and working mothers. Since divorce, in her view, has roots in "political disillusionment and the ever increasing nuclear threat" (making it "an acceptable social phenomenon, like. . . moving to the suburbs"), it would seem to be, like so much in this book, a problem beyond the responsibility or control of mere individuals. So, having followed her own assumptions, the author reaches a self-evident conclusion—that mothers, when economic considerations allow, best serve their children by being around to guide them, teach them, know them.

At this crucial point the book crumbles. For Marie Winn evades the implication of her own conclusion and turns instead to the language of special interests. The question (if it ever really existed) of what is truly best for children is altered by political considerations to read, What is the least painful compromise for women? The dice are loaded when Ms. Winn writes, "all things being equal, children would be better off with a cheerful, confident mother than with a depressed, anxious drudge"—as if each were the only alternative to the other. This is feminist talk, and it reveals the one offensive female stereotype feminists have chosen to exploit rather than refute: full-time mother as drudge.

Marie Winn's inability to define and address her stated problem in any meaningful way—to decide *what is most important*—becomes fully evident when she writes that the "blame, if any is to be assigned, must go to men for not stepping into the breach and taking on a greater share of child care burdens. . . " "Women," she warns, "cannot go backward. . . .But in the interim, children must endure a different, less protected sort of childhood." Sadly, it all comes down to dividing "burdens," guarding territory, and finding culprits. *Children Without Childhood* doesn't promote political views; it clings to them as substitutes for real solutions.

An entirely different picture of childhood—for children and parents—is provided by Polly Berrien Berends in her newly revised *Whole Child/Whole Parent*. A writer by turns exacting and moving, funny and oblique, Ms. Berends is brave enough to quote from *Dialogues in Metapsychiatry* ("The understanding of what is abolishes all that seems to be") on a page facing tips for child-proofing the home ("Socket caps are a must."), and earnest and talented enough to make each idea meaningful to the other.

Only one very sure of her direction could write—as counsel to mothers forced to leave infants for the workplace—"If you have to go to work, you have to go to work. No big deal." A major fact of this book is that *within the context of the author's aspirations* the above is not simplistic or impossible advice. For "No big deal" expresses Polly Berends's "allowed" attitude toward the byproducts of daily problems. Believing that problems are "meaningful, and that each problem we confront is presenting to us the very next lesson we need," the author's goal is a state of spiritual consciousness (oneness with God) in which the single concept of true and false is allowed to replace the ideas of right and wrong, cause and effect, free will, and self-authorship.

The result is that what works ("promotes harmony") is true; all else is false. The further result is the "far-reaching spiritual significance of even the meanest momentary details of our experience." Such is the nature of this loving book that a reader might question Polly Berends's philosophical concepts or specific definitions without ever questioning her integrity or conviction.

In the manner of most spiritually based books, *Whole Child/Whole Parent* is complete unto itself and meant to be embraced whole. Nevertheless, some readers will choose to lift a nugget here and there, using it according to their needs and applying it according to their values. Even at that, this book leaves its mark.

In Defense of the Family, by Rita Kramer, does more than leave its mark; it scores a bullseye. That a book should be given such a title says something about our times. That this particular book will doubtless be viewed in some circles as either radical or reactionary says even more.

Rita Kramer has written a wise, humane, and sensible book that offers parents "an array of ideas that may prove useful in gathering the courage to find and follow [their] own convictions." To this end, she invites readers of her book to "use what you can [and] discard the rest." Chief among her ideas is that control of children belongs to the family "where character can best be structured in relation to loving and at the same time restraining parents."

Having been (sometimes willingly) bullied by experts, coerced by schools, and seduced by various "movements," parents have had their confidence eroded, their values questioned, and their goals for their children obscured. Ms. Kramer's reassuring message is not only that parents should and must reclaim for themselves the primary responsibility of nurturing, guiding and teaching their children, but that they are more than up to

REVIEWERS

WALTER M. SULLIVAN *is the author of* Reconstructing Public Philosophy *(University of California).*

FATHER GERARD REEDY, S.J., *is chairman of the English department at Fordham University.*

MONSIGNOR CHARLES OWEN RICE, *historian, lecturer, and long-time peace and labor activist, is presently serving as pastor of St. Anne's Church in Pittsburgh.*

JANET SCOTT BARLOW *has written for* Parents Magazine, Marriage and Family Living, *and the* Cincinnati Post.

JERZY R. KRZYZANOWSKI *is professor of Slavic and East European languages and literatures at Ohio State University.*

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the task. All parents have to do (no small trick, but it gets easier with practice) is to decide what's important by following their intuition, instinct, and common sense, which have "worked since history began whenever affection was guided by individual life experience." Of course, choosing responsibility makes parents *responsible* (answerable, accountable) — a fact which leads not to burdens or repression, but to greater freedom in making their own decisions by their own standards.

Rita Kramer suggsts that parenthood is not only a noble, but an enobling, task. She writes that one of the challenges of this task is to be "tolerant while maintaining your standards." True to her own advice, she has written a noble book which, like a good parent, provides the confidence of sure expectations and the safety of loving limits.

Poetry across a turbulent history

THE HISTORY OF POLISH LITERATURE

Czeslaw Milosz
California, $32.50, 586 pp.

Jerzy R. Krzyzanowski

A POET, a novelist, an essayist, and a Nobel Prize winner. What more can a man be, having achieved the highest honor bestowed every year upon men and women of letters? Well, Milosz is also a scholar whose history of Polish literature has been recently reissued in a new edition, some fifteen years after it was originally published. With a new epilogue covering the 1960s and 1970s, it is therefore the most up-to-date study on the subject, and chances are it will maintain its leading position for many years to come. No other study thus far, published either in the West or in Poland, covers the span of a thousand years as completely and comprehensively as Milosz's work.

But his study represents more than just a textbook for students of Polish literature at American colleges and universities. Milosz does not restrict its scope to a dry enumeration of facts, dates, and authors. He writes about all that literature lucidly, with involvement and sometimes even passion; he places it in the historical and cultural context; he argues with and challenges what he does not like; and he comments warmly about facts, works, and writers who come close to his heart. For the American reader he provides his own poetic translations of poems ranging from the Middle Ages to the most contemporary times, including his own poetry which has won him the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1980. He comments with compassion or irony on Poland's history. Spanning a millennium, it is a history determined, perhaps, by Poland's geographical location between Germany and Russia, two neighboring powers whose aggressive appetites spelled doom for Poland throughout centuries.

Milosz's poetic personality shines on the pages of his study. If he does not like some authors, e.g., W.S. Reymont, another Polish Nobel Prize winner in 1924, he covers them in a short, two-ages-long space, but to personalities who attract his imagination, like an eighteenth century adventurer, Potocki, he gives twice as much space. Some critics, particularly in Poland, thus find his study opinionated and uneven but this is hardly the case. After all, not only a poet but a scholar, too, is entitled to his own, subjective interpretations of a literary history as long as he renders its letter and spirit. And this is especially true for Milosz. The image of Poland emerging from the pages of his book is faithful to that country's turbulent history with her age of glory during the Renaissance period and her tragic downfall at the end of the eighteenth century, her heroic struggles for freedom spirited by the Romantic poets, and her stubborn resistance against the Nazis and the Communists ever since the beginning of World War II.

An American reader, who by this time is probably familiar with James Michener's bestselling novel *Poland,* will be able to place that novel in the broad context of Polish literary and cultural history, to comprehend the importance of "the Polish Pope," John Paul II, and to appreciate the significance of the "Solidarity" movement which has resulted in a Nobel Peace Prize given to its leader, Lech Walesa in 1983. For Milosz's study is more than just a history of literature — it is a history of a proud nation determined to fight for its freedom.

Correspondence

(Continued from page 418)

Christian truth (his so-called "lust for certainty") is over-argued. Martin stands very firmly within the Catholic theological tradition in his appreciation of the significance of dogmatic truth for intellectual, moral, and spiritual development.

Third, Hinojosa's critique of Martin's assessment of church-world dialogue lacks the sociological realism that serves as the backdrop for Martin's comments: (1) meaningful dialogue cannot take place when a community is deeply insecure in its own self-identity; (2) dialogue is primarily a mode of communication (and persuasion) rather than a vehicle for radical ecclesial self-transformation. Martin's concept of dialogue as evangelical strategy is more consistent with the thrust of Vatican II documents than that proposed by Hinojosa.

Fourthly, Hinojosa uses the term "fundamentalism" much too loosely. By any objective academic standards Martin cannot be classified in the tradition of fundamentalism.

Finally, Hinojosa's association of the charismatic renewal with Montanism is a very poorly chosen slur. It underlines once more the *Reader's Digest* type of research that forms the basis for most of our assessments of the historical and theological significance of the charismatic renewal.

DANIEL CERE

The author replies

San Antonio, Tex.

In one thing Mr. Cere is totally on target. In naming Mr. Martin's position

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an extreme (see the first paragraph of his letter), he simply states my own thesis. As to whether or not the pluralism I advocate pushes for a *via media*, I would demur. For my own position, I would refer Mr. Cere to the article (already cited in my review) by Schineller titled "Christ and Church: A Spectrum of Views" in *Why the Church?* I maintained in the review and continue to maintain, that Martin's position is outside the mainstream of Roman Catholic theological thought, including that of Karl Rahner whom Martin seems to consider as something of a liberal.

As to Mr. Cere's second criticism, I also have an "appreciation of the significance of dogmatic truth for intellectual, moral, and spiritual development." But I would argue that this appreciation stands far from a naive realism which would see revelation as propositional truth. It is precisely this approach which leads Martin to espouse the submission of women to men as a divine ordinance, rather than that which it is — an ideological (though unconscious) means of control.

Mr. Cere's third criticism, "sociological realism aside," is that "Martin's concept of dialogue as evangelical strategy is more consistent with the thrust of Vatican II" than that proposed by me. A case could be made for this; there are various positions found concurrently in the Vatican II documents, including one which supports my view of dialogue. Nevertheless, I maintain that true dialogue does not occur when persuasion is the principal goal of the exchange.

Fourthly, Mr. Cere objects to my use of "fundamentalism" as a term which would apply to Martin, averring that by "any academic standard Martin cannot be classified in the tradition of fundamentalism." I would simply refer Mr. Cere to the well-known Biblical scholar James Barr's work titled *Fundamentalism*. Barr would say that the ". . . contrast between 'nominal Christian' and 'true Christian' is a distinction basic to all fundamentalist thought and action" (p. 13). Is this a characteristic of Martin's thought? Indeed it is. See Martin's *A Crisis of Truth*, p. 208, and his *Unless the Lord Builds the House . . .*, pp. 13ff., and 21ff. Furthermore, for a more in-depth treatment of fundamentalism in the charismatic movement, I would refer Mr. Cere to my article, among others on the topic, in *Catholic Charismatic*, Vol. 3, No. 5. My Master's thesis on the same topic is available through University Microfilms.

Finally, whether or not my association of the charismatic movement with Montanism is a slur, only history will answer long after Mr. Cere or I am around. My fond hope is that it will be an ill-suited comparison because of a change in direction of certain elements of the movement. But no one who has read the sources on the Montanist movement in Pierre de Labriolle's *Les sources de l'histoire du montanisme* and who knows the contemporary charismatic movement can fail to see clear similarities.

As a final word, I would like to say quite unequivocally that great numbers of charismatics and whole segments of the movement are not influenced by the mentality against which I protest. I do not know what "type of research that forms the basis of most of our assessments of the historical and theological significance of the charismatic renewal" Mr. Cere refers to in his critique, but I do know many excellent theologians in the movement who have written historical and theological treatments, among whom are Donald Gelpi, S.J., René Laurentin and Kilian McDonnell, O.S.B.

JUAN-LORENZO HINOJOSA

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